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ABSTRACT

These two issues of the journal present information on the English Teachers' Association of Israel, report on various conferences, and offer the following articles: "The Winter Conference Report" (Riva Levenchuk and Rananah Gold); "Traditional Creativity" (Simon Lichman); "An Inspector Calls" (Shai Aran); "Using Films in EFL Classroom" (Elaine Alcalay); "Literature: Questions Minus Answers" (Adele Raemer); "Building Self Esteem" (Chava Weinberg); "Thunderstruck or Lit-Up" (Sarah Zimin); "Using SIOP" (Arieh Sherris); "Yosef" (Genia Berman); "Black Protest Poetry" (Joan Orkin); "Tuesdays with Morrie" (Janet Winter); "The Child with ADD/ADHD" (Naomi Nahmias); "Israel's Radio Days" (Eduardo Lina); "An EFL Teacher's ABC" (Esther Lucas); "Classroom Debating" (Yaron Nahari); "Have Knapsack, Will Travel" (Judith Yoel); "Concerns about Projects" (Loubna Dakwar); "Over the Bridge" (Anastasia Gersten); "Don't Assume" (Elana Cheshin); "Shylock's Revenge" (Raphael Gefen); "Shattering the Myth" (Penny Ur); "Developing Dispositions of Reflectiveness" (Amos Paran); "What's New about Questions?" (Rachel Segev-Miller); "Teaching Cinema" (Laura Ornstein); "Storytelling" (Jessie Cohen); "Coordinator's Forum" (Jessie Koren); "English Day: Multiple Intelligences" (Rawia Hayik); "Books for Israel Project" (Richelle Budd Caplan); "Teaching the Holocaust" (Jack Pillemer); "Making a Long Story Short" (Nava Horovitz); "The Heart that Lives On" (Susan Baram); "Netsurfing" (Laura Shashua and Sigal Dricker-Levi); and "Shattering the Myths II" (Penny Ur). Book reviews are also included. (SM)

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ED 481 378

ETAI Forum, 2003

Editors
Batya Lederfein
Margaret Porat

ETAI Forum v14 n2-3 Spr-Sum 2003

English Teachers' Association of Israel

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ETAI Forum

English Teachers' Association of Israel

As this edition goes to press, the world is in turmoil and Israel anxiously wonders whether it will be embroiled in a war.

There's no rest in our profession, either: No sooner have we become used to the terminology of the Curriculum than we are obliged to come to grips with the implications of the NBA: performance-based tasks, projects and internet-based research. Over the last few months, ETNI, our Internet-based discussion list, has been deluged with outpouring from teachers who are bewildered and skeptical, on the one hand, and already racing ahead to implement Ministry recommendations, on the other.

We have mentioned several times before what role we believe the Forum should adopt: to summarize the daily email debates within a time-frame perspective, to provide readers with materials which will "enable" the process of change, and, finally, to provide teachers with a forum for discussion of values. Last things first. In this edition, Penny Ur takes up the cudgel against what she feels are "myths" mushrooming in the storms of constantly-changing methodology. Do you agree with her? Let us hear what you think!

Secondly, we have a wealth of ideas in this edition for you to think about and use: debating, films, internet projects, webquests, lessons about poetry, and an article about the power of language. We have also included a report about the fascinating Arab-Jewish intercultural projects conducted by Simon Lichman, the plenary speaker at the winter conference.

What we don't have, and which we need very badly, are volunteers to help us make the Forum even richer. Is there anyone out there who could help us summarize the extremely important ETNI discussions? write up a regular web-resource page? elicit and collect samples of tasks and projects? do book reviews? take charge of organizing practical classroom tips? collect some jokes to help us get through these troubled times?

We need you, fellow English teachers. How about getting in touch?

Margaret and Batya

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Traditional Creativity**, by Simon Lichman
- **Black Protest Poetry**, by Joan Orkin
- **Tuesdays with Morrie,** by Janet Winter
- **Classroom Debating**, by Yaron Nahari
- **Shattering the Myth**, by Penny Ur

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MESSAGES FROM OUR SECRETARY, SHEILA BAUMAN

We would like to thank Dr. George Rantissi for his contribution to the executive board of ETAI. George has decided to step down from the board this year and we wish him the very best of luck in his future career.

Make a note / Put it in your diary

SUMMER CONFERENCE 2003

Renaissance Hotel
Jerusalem

- Pre conference July 13th
- Conference - July 14-15th

SPRING CONFERENCES

Don't forget the upcoming spring conferences

April 7th, 8th

Academic Arab College for Education in Israel, Haifa

April 9th

Amit , Kiriat Hahinuch , Tel Aviv

We would like to welcome Lubna Dakwar as a new member of the ETAI board.

Special thanks to the colleges and schools that have opened their doors and extended their hospitality for ETAI events:

- **Kaye College in Beer Sheva**
- **The Academic Arab college for Education in Israel, Haifa.**
- **Amit School, Kiriat Hahinuch, Tel Aviv**

International Conference

REACHING FOR GREATER HEIGHTS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Celebrate the Silver Jubilee of ETAI in Jerusalem, the City of Gold, at our next International Conference which will be held between

July 11-14, 2004

We would like to thank Nava Horovitz for agreeing to convene the conference.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all our members to please update the office if any of their information has been changed ... address, telephone, e-mail, etc.

Please keep in mind that you have three months in order to renew your membership, after which you will be dropped from our mailing list.

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National Chairperson Susan Holzman
Treasurer Tessa Shrem
Office Director Sheila Bauman
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Valerie Jakar	Ahuva Kellman	Riva Levenchuk	Margaret Porat
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A SPECIAL THANK YOU
TO
ERIC COHEN BOOKS
for laying out the ETAI FORUM
and to Eric for his constant help and support

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing this on January 18th, 2003, Yesterday's Jerusalem Post magazine had two articles that represent my feelings today. One is a depressing account of an attempt by Professor Mona Baker of the University of Manchester to initiate a widespread boycott of Israeli academics. The second is an inspiring story about the success of a special program at the Leo Baeck School in Haifa, which helps Ethiopian students pass their matriculation exams.

That is the reality of living in Israel: highs and lows, success and discouragement, inspiration and despair, achievement and failure. We have two alternatives; one is to give up and not to care and let the negative take over and engulf us. After all, who are we to fight the world? How can we win? What can we do against such odds? The other alternative is to start small and do what can be done in our limited milieu to make a better world. As teachers we have opportunities every day to do this. I envy the staff at Leo Baeck who can say; "Of the 19 Ethiopian students who took the Matriculation exam in Hebrew, 17 passed. These are kids who were illiterate in Amharic until three years ago." I am sure that the road was rough and filled with potholes and obstacles and detours. And of course, for these kids, this is just the first stop in their academic journey. But to have been part of their achievement must be exhilarating.

As teachers, our achievements rarely make the headlines or even the back pages of the newspaper. So here, I want to take the opportunity to use this space and this platform to say: The English teachers of Israel are a dedicated and professional bunch.

- They took time from their much deserved and much needed vacation to attend the Winter Conference in Beer Sheva, convened by Dr. Riva Levenchuk and Rananah Gold. Any teacher who might have been feeling discouraged and disparaged left the Conference inspired and re-charged.
- They take time daily to discuss, question, and answer their peers on ETNI. I am amazed again and again at the honest discussion, the peer support and the sharing of information that occurs. And I am filled with admiration for the ETNI crew, David Lloyd and Gail Mann, who organize and administer this site.
- They read the ETAI Forum and the ETJ in order to be up-to-date and knowledgeable about what goes on in the classroom and what is new. Medals should be given to Margaret Porat and Batya Lederfein, editors of the Forum, and to the staff at the ETJ, Judy Steiner, editor, and Raquelle Azran, managing editor. Hats off to the countless teachers who write for these publications and present at the conferences.

Let's just say that for English teachers, the glass is definitely half full. We are a professional group that is active, inspiring and successful. We have amazing achievements behind us and remarkable projects ahead.

ETAI strives to serve all Israel's teachers. This is a difficult task for many reasons. One of our problems is scheduling conferences. In other countries, conferences are scheduled on the weekends. We don't have a weekend. So we go for school holidays.

The question is, "Whose school holiday?" I believe that we are probably the only English teachers' organization in the world that sits down to plan events with Jewish, Moslem and Christian calendars in hand. Last year, we held our conference in the North during the school holiday of the Arab schools. Fortunately, many Jewish teachers were able to attend as well. This year, the organizing committee in the North searched and sought, but to no avail; there was no one day when both the Jewish sector and the Arab sector were on holiday together. Their innovative solution was to hold a two-day conference, April 3th, the last day of the Arab schools' spring holiday and April 4th, the first day of the Jewish schools' spring holiday. This decision was not taken lightly. First of all, the College, The Academic Arab College for Education in Israel in Haifa, extended its vacation an extra day in order to accommodate the conference. Secondly, the committee took upon itself a huge job planning for these two days. Their dedication is prompted by their feeling that the teachers of the North should have the opportunity to attend an ETAI conference in their area.

I certainly do not want to neglect Tel Aviv. On Wednesday, April 4th, teachers from the center of the country will be meeting at Amit School, Kiryat HaHinuch, in Tel Aviv. Of course, this is Passover vacation, but we all need a day off from cleaning and shopping and dust. Spring is a time for growth and renewal, and ETAI is the perfect place to start.

I hope to see you at these events, at the location and on the day which is convenient for you!

Susan Holzman

We join with the rest of Israel and the whole world
in mourning Israel's first astronaut

Col. Ilan Ramon, z"l

We would like to dedicate the next issue of the ETAI Forum
to his memory by publishing a project in his honor.

We invite English teachers to send in projects they have designed and
conducted in their schools.

ACT – ADVANCED COURSE FOR TEACHERS

ACT is a high-level, five-and-a-half-day fully residential course, for experienced teachers run as a coordinated ETAI/Oranim project. It has run four times before, highly successfully (ask any of its 'survivors'!), and is being offered this year at Oranim from July 6 – 11, 2003 (the week before the ETAI Conference in Jerusalem).

The program includes four 'mini-courses', as well as guest speakers, opportunities for reading and discussion, and individual projects. Planned topics and course leaders: teaching reading (Elisheva Barkon); teaching literature (Lynn Barzilai); mentoring (Lily Orland-Barak); educational assessment (Kari Smith); current issues in TEFL methodology (Penny Ur).

Participants must be members of ETAI and have at least five years' teaching experience. Cost to participants is NIS 580, which includes tuition, course booklet, accommodation and meals (note that the actual cost is substantially more than this, but the course is subsidized by ETAI). Participants will get *gmul hishtalmut*. Note that in order to get the desired 56 hours *gmul*, the course will continue to midday Friday, instead of finishing on Thursday as in previous years.

If you wish to apply, copy and fill in the application form below, enclosing a cheque to ETAI for the deposit of NIS 100, and send to ETAI. If you wish for further information, call Penny on 04-6801460; or email penny@macam.ac.il

Deadline for applications: June 1 2003.

There's plenty of time still … but don't leave it too late! Maximum number of participants: 28.

ACT Application Form

I should like to participate in this year's ACT course at Oranim July 6-11.	
Name:	
Address:	
Tel. no:	Cellphone:
Email:	
ETAI membership no:	No. of years' teaching experience:
Particular professional interests:	
I enclose a cheque payable to ETAI for NIS 100. Signature:	

REGIONAL IATEFL CONFERENCE IN TURKEY

By Margaret Porat

It was with great excitement that Susan Holzman, Valerie Jakar, Valerie Whiteson and I boarded the plane at Ben Gurion Airport in October for the first joint regional conference, an international conference organized by three local Organizations – INGED/ELEA (Turkey), together with ETAI (Israel) and TESOL (Greece). For quite a few years it has been a dream of ETAI to have joint activities with our neighbours, and here we were – the dream was about to come true.

Inged (Turkey) hosted this first international conference at the Metu College in Ankara. We were the Israeli delegation, and were met with such hospitality and kindness that it was hard to believe. We took the flight to Istanbul and arrived fairly early on Sunday morning. With the "guidance" of Susan Holzman, who had been to Istanbul before, we were shown some of the highlights of this beautiful city. Of course one day is not nearly enough, but the visit certainly whet our appetites for more. In the evening we took a luxury bus from Istanbul to Ankara (a six-hour trip which, although long, was very comfortable and well worth the saving in money). We were met at the airport and taken to the guest house on the Metu College campus, where we were introduced to members of the other foreign delegations.

The conference was extremely well organized, right to the last detail. There were participants from Turkey, of course, as well as from Greece, Croatia, Malaysia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, China, England, United States, Israel and other countries. The atmosphere was homely and yet extremely professional. The Turkish delegation was wonderful and couldn't do enough to make our stay memorable. The four members of the Israeli delegation all presented papers. I was asked to give the plenary session on Saturday afternoon. The title of my session was "Games and Game-like activities – not only for young kids or rainy days". Susan Holzman spoke about a vocabulary project using dictionaries in the classroom,Valerie Jakar about mutual understanding and Valerie Whiteson about writers in English from around the world. The four of us also participated in a panel on the very controversial subject "Focus on Form".

This year the joint international conference will again be held in Ankara at the Baskent University between the 10th and 12th of October, 2003. This conference, entitled **"Multiculturalism in ELT Practices: Unity and Diversity"** will be organized by INGED (Turkey), BETA (Rumania), ETAI (Israel) and TESOL (Greece). A call for papers has been sent out. The final date for submitting papers is 15th June, 2003. We are really hoping that a large Israeli delegation will participate in the conference and that in the following year, 2004, there will be a large turnout of our neighbours at our International Conference in Jerusalem.

The experience was wonderful both professionally and socially. We are convinced that all sides can really benefit from the mutual cooperation. More details about the conference and the call for papers can be accessed through Sheila at the office and www.inged-elea.org.tr.

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ETAI SETS NEW RECORD: REPORT OF THE WINTER CONFERENCE IN BEER SHEVA, 2002

By Dr. Riva Levenchuk and Rananah Gold – Conference Convenors

ETAI's winter conference held at the Kaye Academic College of Education in Beer Sheva on December 1, 2002, drew over 550 participants, setting a new record for attendance at a winter venue. We welcomed teachers in the field, new immigrant teachers, and many students from the teachers' colleges. The theme of the conference was "Ourselves and Others: Communicating in English".

A highlight of the plenary session was the lively performance of the children's choir of the Achva school of Dimona. The choir in colorful costumes sang original songs in English accompanied by drum music and dance movement. Dr. Simon Lichman, poet and folklorist, presented an intriguing slide lecture on a folklore project between Jewish and Arab pupils and their families in Jerusalem. The project brings parents and grandparents into the schools to instruct the pupils in games they used to play as children. They also guide the pupils in the preparation of various traditional foods. Each child returns home with knowledge of new/old games as well as a jar of pickled vegetables. These activities have brought together pupils who live close to one another but who have never shared any experiences. The result of the project is a new sense of being neighbours, shared by pupils, their parents and grandparents. (see article p.12)

Dr. Judy Steiner, chief inspector for English language education, also spoke at the plenary session and brought teachers up-to-date on the NBA (National *Bagrut* Assessment) and how it differs from past *Bagrut* examinations. Judy's open attitude and concise explanations did much to dispel the trepidations of high school teachers now preparing their pupils for the exams in 2003.

A special award was presented to Dr. Shlomo Back, president of Kaye Academic College of Education, by Dr. Susan Holtzman, ETAI chairperson, citing the college's special contribution and continuing support of ETAI.

Over thirty workshops were presented throughout the day by experienced teachers and teacher educators. Topics ranged from "Teaching EFL in Traditional Arab Classrooms through Authentic Children's Literature", by Ruwaida Abu-Rass and Dr. Susan Holzman, to a computer presentation, "Bringing Poetry to Life", by Raymond Ravinsky.

Also presenting at the conference were overseas guests including John Turek, English language officer of the United States Embassy working out of Jordan, Mr. Jeremy Jacobson from the British Council visiting from England, and Arieh Sherris, from the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C.

Following a full day of workshops, Professor Penny Ur delivered a thought-provoking PowerPoint presentation entitled "Shattering the Myths" on some of the misconceptions concerning the teaching of English. Regarding the myth that grammar should not be formally taught to pupils, for example, she pointed out that research indicates that meaningful grammar activities are a powerful tool for learning a language (see article p.62).

A very full conference day ended with a raffle of English books and tape recordings donated by the publishers and given to the lucky ticket holders.

Our warmest thanks to the following, whose participation helped make this conference so successful:

- Presenters, for sharing their knowledge and experience
- Publishers, for displaying the newest educational materials and their generous donations
- Yaki and Ruth Ophir, for the wonderful roses
- English inspectors and teacher educators
- Choir of Achva Elementary School, Dimona
- ETAI Executive Committee – Chairperson Dr. Susan Holzman and Director Sheila Bauman – for their help and support in preparing the Winter Conference
- Teachers and students of Kaye Academic College, and our secretary Rachel Moser

THANKS

I want to again thank Rananah Gold and Dr. Riva Levenchuk and all those from ETAI who worked so hard to put together today's ETAI conference in Beer Sheva. It was PACKED, both with participants and content and a wonderful day was had by all. Everyone really enjoyed the day and the well-organized conference filled with fabulous sessions. Keep up the good work!

To those who missed it, sorry, but you really missed out! I think I speak for all those who attended.

Leah Wolf
Michlelet Hemdat HaDarom
wolflea@macam.ac.il

As one of the participants at the ETAI Winter Conference in Beersheva on 1st December, 2002, I would like to thank Riva Levenchuk, Rananah Gold and all the helpers for the wonderful conference they organized. It has now become a tradition to expect something special in Beer Sheva and we were not disappointed. The choice of plenary speakers was excellent. There was humour and much to be learnt. The enthusiastic children's choir from the Achva Elementary School was a delightful surprise.

No effort was spared to make the occasion memorable for one and all.

Esther Lucas
lucas@bezeqint.net

Dear Riva and Rananah.

I just wanted to tell you that it was a great conference. The theme was an important one, the presentations were of a uniformly high level, varied, interesting, original and useful. The children's choir was lovely and the book exhibition ruined by my budget buying books and toys for my grandchildren. I was very impressed by the organization and somewhat awed by the amount of attention to detail required to make everyone feel comfortable and at home and see that things ran without a hitch, which they did.

Please thank Sheila for me for her kindness and efficiency and thank you for inviting me. I had a very worthwhile day.

Erica Garb.
ericagarbl@hotmail.com

To Sheila and all the organizers at ETAI,

Congratulations on a very successful ETAI Winter Conference. Your organization gets better and better. I'd particularly like to single out Riva and Rananah for making Kaye the most hospitable college in the country.

With thanks and appreciation,

Gaye Bergman

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THE APPLICATION OF FOLKLORE TO MULTICULTURAL AND CO-EXISTENCE EDUCATION

By Simon Lichman and Rivanna Miller

Keynote Address by Dr. Simon Lichman at the ETAI Winter Conference, Beer Sheva, 2002

I first came across Folklore as an academic discipline while reading a book on English Folk Drama (or "mumming plays") for a B.A. in the Department of English Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The book was peppered with strange anecdotes about the performance of mumming plays and photographs of men dressed up in weird costumes, but the author did not explain why performance of these plays should be of significance to the communities in which they were performed. Rather, he concentrated on trying to explain the relationship between these performances and "pagan fertility rites".

I found the idea of masquerading Englishmen quite unlikely, even absurd, until I thought of an image from my own background which could be seen as equally absurd to an "outsider". My father, a chartered accountant with a well-respected practice in the centre of London, used to take matza sandwiches to work during *chol hamo'ed Pesach*, and I imagined how strange this might seem to his non-Jewish clients. I realised that there must also be contexts in which traditions of folk drama would make sense to their own communities.

I decided to write a Ph.D. on how the mumming traditions related to community life through time by concentrating on one of the traditions described in the book. While writing the thesis, I also considered how this study could be of relevance to life in Israel. How is folklore itself of use to its own specific community and to society at large?

Eleven years ago I established the Centre for Creativity in Education and Cultural Heritage, a non-profit organization, and developed folklore programmes which address several issues facing Israeli society and the region: co-existence between neighbouring Arab and Jewish communities; cultural pluralism; and the transmission of home-culture between generations in modern societies. One such programme, the "Traditional Creativity Through School Communities Project", brings together pairs of Jewish and Arab school communities (pupils, teachers, parents and grandparents). There are two articulated levels or objectives to this Project. First is the participants' discovery and exchange of folklore. The second is the encouragement of participants to take responsibility for getting to know one another and to create dynamic partnerships.

The Project is based on building long-term relationships between neighbouring cultures and generations. Participation in the programmes is in itself a positive experience of co-existence. Children work on their own heritage rather than the gap between communities, learning about each other's culture as they experience their own. An atmosphere of pluralism is encouraged through the acceptance of differences between groups as well as the discovery of similarities. Members of the extended family are brought into the process in their expert capacity as tradition-bearers. Where folklore projects might see preservation of tradition as their main task, this Project shows participants how the wisdom of tradition, transmitted as ongoing and dynamic, can facilitate social cohesion. Over the last eleven years, we have worked with a variety of urban and rural communities in which the target populations include religious and secular Jews, Moslems and Christians.

Most people associate "folklore" with national culture, represented, for example, by folk dance, ethnic costumes and religious festivals. "Traditional Creativity", in the title of this project, underlines our interest in having participants experience the process by which folklore is transmitted. We therefore concentrate on "home culture", meaning aspects of folklore to which everyone has access in their own families, while also making tangible the changing nature of Tradition through the generations.

With regard to "co-existence education", "conflict resolution" or "peace studies", the underlying message of this project is that every individual has a role to play in how society evolves. Using folklore as a model for understanding this process, pupils recognise their parents' and grandparents' role in social history and come to appreciate how they, too, have a part to play.

The Jewish and Arab communities that participate in this project have immediate access to one another because of the way the programme is structured. We usually begin working with pairs of Jewish and Arab 5th

Grade classes (10-11 year olds), who meet four to six times a year for at least two years, some groups continuing to meet in Junior High School. The paired Jewish and Arab school communities, however, build long-term work relationships, with the programme becoming part of each school's curriculum. The Project Team works with the Class Teachers in each school separately, teaching one lesson per class per week (1 hour). The units of study are designed around aspects of home culture that the specific communities will definitely have in common. Themes include Traditional Play, Foodways, Family Stories and Traditional Song. Pupils interview their parents and grandparents and bring information and examples to class.

Every six to eight weeks, the paired Jewish and Arab classes meet for a Joint Activity, held alternately in each school, that lasts for the full school morning and is structured around members of pupils' families who come as tradition bearers and folk artists. For example, in the first Joint Activity, which is usually based on Traditional Outdoor Play, parents and grandparents lead mixed groups of Jewish and Arab children in playing such games as hopscotch, jump rope, siji and five stones, according to their different traditions and the practices of their childhood. The children also work on the responsibilities of being guests and hosts. When possible, they visit mosques, churches, synagogues, craft workshops, museums and parks together. In-service training is provided for participating teachers who have direct input in the running of their classes and the planning of their Joint Activities. Evaluation is an ongoing feature of every aspect of this Project, from programme conceptualisation to particular events and activities. Feedback sessions with project staff, school staff, parents and grandparents, and children are held throughout the year.

We try to create atmospheres in which the activities are exciting, fun and educational, while also requiring a commitment to responsible participation. The children show sustained interest in each others' way of life and in their own heritage. They call for information about various customs and express a stronger desire to learn Arabic and Hebrew respectively. They enjoy seeing their parents in Project Activities and encourage them to participate. Beyond the formal Project activities, there is ongoing communication between some children, which does not stop in times of tension. The impact on participating communities deepens as more families are brought into the process, and the ripple effect reaches the surrounding populations. We have seen how Arab and Jewish parents and grandparents involved in the Project, having met in a constructive atmosphere, are able to then meet socially, as well as to work together on issues of particular concern to both communities. By the time participants discuss the situation in the Middle East, both children and adults know they are talking to people who are genuinely interested in their point of view.

In these particularly difficult times, the Project remains successful in bringing Jewish and Arab communities together because of its long-term community-oriented approach. While suffering the consequences of what is happening all around us, the paired communities with whom we work have people who they have come to know on a personal and positive level. For them, it is harder to be carried along into stereotyping generalisations about "Jews" and "Arabs", seeing each other as partners who have a stake in creating a safe society based on equality, dignity and mutual respect.

We were especially honoured to be part of the Winter Conference with the theme "Ourselves and Others: Communicating in English", since we could share the sense of hope that the "Traditional Creativity In School Communities Project" gives its participants. There are many ways of applying folklore to education in multicultural settings. We have concentrated on co-existence education, but the programme would work just as well in any Israeli class community, whether it be multicultural or homogeneous. Although we encourage participants to collect their home cultures in the source language, we find that creating "new" or parallel texts in other languages for purposes of presentation to a wider audience is always seen as an appealing challenge.

This paper has been co-authored by Dr. Simon Lichman, a folklorist and the Director of the Centre for Creativity in Education and Cultural Heritage, and Ms. Rivanna Miller, who works in evaluation and programme design.

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AN INSPECTOR CALLS
FORTY YEARS ON: HASMONEAN PRIMARY SCHOOL REVISITED

By Shai Aran

Elementary school, primary school, grade school, *bet sefer yesodi* – the name, the smells, the memories; powerful and evocative. What, gentle reader, did you learn there?

Now, nostalgically, my sister – both real and collegial – and I reminisce. We remember our little Primary School, the Hasmonean Prep. in leafy North West London. It was a school with a mission and a message (and I could list lots of theoretical bibliography that tells us that schools with clear missions and messages are effective: look at the References below for Fullan 1995, and Conley, 1997).

It seemed big then, of course. How huge must some primary schools now appear to today's children? And we learned a lot there. We learned never to run or push inside, to walk quietly (I hear Headmaster, Mr Cohen's voice stressing the word) in and out of assembly, where we learned to listen to classical music, sing prayers and the Shema and chant the Sidras in their weekly order of reading, *Bereishis, Noach, Lech lecho, Vayera, Chaye Soro, Toldos* ... and then to walk, quickly and quietly, to our classrooms where the day's learning began. Not bad value, really, for 20 minutes a day for 300 children. And Mr Cohen had never even heard of Maslow ... (Maslow, 1968)

Safely in our forms (classes) we learned to read and write English. And we learned to read and write Hebrew. I now know that the approach to language learning was eclectic, and it included all manner of modern devices that we have since both constructed and deconstructed, but which way back then were just part of "the routine". I will demonstrate. Hasmo was big on Whole Language – we learned things by heart, valuable things like *shiras hayam*; *birkat hamazon*; and phonics, like *kametz aleph oh*, *kametz bes boh*. There were structural readers in English – big time – the much maligned Peter and Jane, where Peter was great and Jane was just Jane. Nevertheless, we learned to read easily and rapidly, no doubt aided and abetted by, to die for, Rover the dog. We wrote a lot, both Hebrew and English, with pens and nibs (remember nibs, anybody?) dipped in ink from the ink-well, and, for some strange reason, we children were proud when our writing was "beautiful". In those ancient times text books didn't keep changing, so they were kept in school, and the book monitor, often this writer, was just sent to "bring them up". No questions asked, and up they came.

We learned English poetry by heart (Walter Delamare), English songs (Rule Britannia) and for some strange reason in the 6th grade we were taught to read *Rashi* writing. We learned Arithmetic and Geography and History and even elocution in an attempt to eradicate North London accents, Jewish accents, or any accents that the elocution teacher didn't want us to 'ave.

Post modernity eschews black and white renditions, absolute clarity of purpose, overly defined values, traditional gender roles – the kind of things that, perhaps, contributed to make my primary school the magic that it was. Gentle reader, you might claim that the ETAI Forum is no place for lamenting times past, excessive nostalgia. But all this has lasted no more than a page (and how many pages have you thrown out at the photocopier, the fax, the printer this week?).

The real reason for this possibly embarrassing outpour of emotion is not so much therapeutic as to help (enable?) us to think of our primary schools in Israel today, and the English that we teach in them.

I propose to glance at three issues which some would deem pivotal in our assessment of elementary education: school-based instruction, class-based learning, and pupil-directed evaluation. My argument is not only rooted in my own past (even though "narrative" reigns supreme among cherished post-modern Kosher items).

It relates to here and now.

School-based instruction

I visit very many elementary schools, very often, and I've been doing that for nearly a decade. Schools that work well have a good Principal (Sarason, 1983). Readers who find they are not able to work as effectively as they would like to should consider seeking out the school principal for help, advice and, above all, co-operation. Yes, I know: the *mechanechet* is usually called in when Trouble arises, but take my word, these warm and wonderful lynch pins of the system are occasionally unaware of issues pertaining to cultural

gaps between English teachers and the children, not to mention cultural gaps between English teachers and many of the other significant post holders in the school. Most times *mechanchot* are sensitive, helpful and kind; only sometimes are they not. Only very, very, very rarely are they harsh, attitudinal or derisive.

Principals, however, always want things to work well in school; therefore we should share our goals with them. They should be involved in our clearly spelled out short- and long-range plans. They are our best partners in school. Working together with the school principal gives all concerned a feeling of joint venture and belonging. Remember Maslow! English days become a reality when the principal is involved: Children "do" English as part of school life in *Mifgash Boker* or *tekes Rosh Hodesh*, as part of the school newspaper, in unforgettable parent-student evenings with story telling, games, an English speaking café or even children-made videos for the learning community to view and enjoy. English is best when it is a branch on the school tree, fed by school sap for it to flourish and get really strong.

Class-based learning

Here we're talking nuts and bolts. Teachers reading this may be saying what I learned to sing at Hasmonean Primary: *Esa einai el heharim – me'ayin yavo ezri*? (I raise my eyes to the mountains. Where will my help come from?) Fortunately, there are some answers.

We inspectors provide, dare I say, high quality in-service sessions worth both attending and the *gemulim* which they carry. INSET provides a forum for discussion of the Ministry Curriculum, which is an exceptionally heuristic, thought-provoking document. The sessions provide input on state-of-the-art research on reading instruction (Clapham & Wall, 2001), writing instruction and classroom management. INSET provides a forum for production and discussion of teacher-based ideas, goals and objectives. Are we using this expensive resource to its full?

Then, we have some magnificent textbooks which are sometimes under-used. Worksheets involve extra preparation (plus expensive photostats) for teachers, and perhaps "busy work" for children. Often teachers work too hard in class, leaving the children to – as it were – passively watch the show. Sometimes children don't write at all during a lesson and that's a shame, because when they write – low be it whispered – they are calmed and lulled and soothed.

Have we got our routines working: starting lessons clearly, timing activities carefully – (the magic 15 minutes), 100% books, zero walkabout for sharpening, zero walkabout for drinks and the bath-room, zero intruders allowed to enter? Are we all giving really clear instructions when we want 30 children to obey us? Are we engaging imaginations with stories? Poems? Long chunks of text? Every lesson! Are we skipping things in the textbook that we ourselves don't want to teach? Because we certainly should be! Are we going too fast? too slow? just right? Have we meticulously planned and prepared what we intend to teach that day (and looking at the textbook in advance is planning!) The answer for you, gentle reader, will probably be "yes", because you are the ones that care, because you are the ones that go to ETAI conferences, read the Forum, and are reflective practitioners, not just common or garden teachers.

Pupil-directed assessment

Even in Hasmonean, that bower of bliss, we children knew there was something called the "scholarship" that some pupils would pass and some would fail. The dreaded 11+ – now, of course, defunct – loomed somewhere at the end of the road. And yes, even way back then, pupils were prepared for the exam right there with the pens and the nibs and the chanting. Over the years I have learned that assessment or examinations or *medidot* are a useful and instructive, but seriously abused and misunderstood, part of school reality. For most of my life I have lived in terror of exams, and the truth is that I have never done very well at them. Examinations cannot and will not and should not vanish from school life. Today, though, things are looking up. Testing and its newborn first cousin, Evaluation, are both more humane and, I think, more effective. Very Big kids can do Ph.Ds without statistics. Medium kids can do *Bagrut* in music. Little kids can read aloud, talk, colour, react to text with a dance, make a T-shirt once they have read the book, or make a puppet or a video or a poster or a project. And all that in addition to open-ended and multiple-choice and graphic-organizing devices for plain old reading comprehension. Remember Paul Simon had 50 ways: "You just drop off the key, Lee, and set yourself free."

So, looking at things with the double advantages of hindsight and perspective, we note promise and problems, doubt and dash, vulnerability and valiance. The workplace, like a boat on the ocean, needs careful,

skillful and knowledgeable navigation. But in it, to use the words of e.e. Cummings, "whatever we lose, like a you or a me, it's always ourselves that we find...."

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USING FILMS IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

By Elaine Alcalay

How many teachers have entered the classroom, knowing full well that the students would love to see a film but feeling that this would be a waste of precious class time? Not so. Films, even best sellers such as Harry Potter or Lord of the Rings, can easily be integrated into the classroom in such a way as to promote both language learning and media literacy.

Films fall under the category of popular culture. Popular culture can be said to be culture that is widely favored or well-liked by many people (Storey, 1993). In addition, popular culture is "mass culture". It is mass-produced for mass-consumption; the whole world watches the same films and often even the same television programs.

Students often feel that popular culture belongs to them; the students interact with popular culture in far more ways than adults do and are more knowledgeable about it. Students also enjoy their media experiences and consider them a valuable part of their culture (Quin & McMahon, 1997). For example, they are familiar with all the new films and know many facts about their favorite actors or actresses. Since students are far from reluctant to learn the language of pop culture, it therefore makes sense to integrate it into the EFL lesson (Cheung, 2001).

The use of popular culture in teaching creates an environment that enhances learning. When teachers design lessons using examples drawn from popular culture, students will find them easy to follow. The classroom atmosphere will become more harmonious as learning takes place in a relaxed manner, and more enjoyable as students are engaging in activities they like (Cheung, 2001). In short, lessons that involve popular culture are likely to be more enjoyable both to the students and the teacher. In addition, when students are presented with authentic material and authentic tasks to work on, they are motivated both with regard to communication in English and towards actual language learning (Hirsh, 1989, in Hobbs, 1997).

As stated above, using films in the classroom can lead to active learning in two fields, that of English language learning and that of media literacy. With regard to English language learning, films with English dialogue can obviously be regarded as authentic texts from which students can learn. While watching a film, students are exposed to techniques that make use of drama, songs and audiovisual materials to convey meaning and content. These techniques are highly effective in language learning (Porter, 1990, in Hobbs, 1997).

After watching a film, students are often happy to voice opinions in English on what they have seen. In addition, they are willing to talk about the film's content, its characters, and express their feelings about it. A film can also act as a catalyst for free speech and writing in English since the students feel confident about the content matter.

Using a film in an EFL lesson can also be used to promote media literacy. Films can be regarded as visual texts and, as such, have inherent within them their own language, the language of films. Films are, for the most part, easy to understand – if only because in the great majority of cases they have been designed to be instantly accessible to audiences.

Films have meaning because people want them to mean. Meaning is not something inert; rather, it is the result of a process whereby people "make sense" of something with which they are confronted (Novell-Smith, 2000). Students watch the film and confront the meaningful elements that have been devised by the filmmakers; they understand the different indications of genre, character and plot from the prompts that are given within the text. Being familiar with films, students are used to reading film texts, and this knowledge can be exploited in the EFL classroom.

There are various areas of media literacy that are ideally suited to the EFL classroom. These are media category, media language and media representation.

- Media category talks about the type of text being watched, how it is categorized, what genre it is, and which media is being used.
- Media language talks about how we know what the film means and how the media produces meanings, including the codes, conventions and narrative structure of the film.
- Media representation talks about how the subject is presented and the relation between media texts and actual places, people, events and ideas. It also

includes the ways films stereotype and the consequences of stereotyping. (Bazelgette, 1992).

All discerning film viewers will easily be able to categorize films that they are watching. There are obvious differences between a romantic comedy, a war film or a thriller. Any film that is watched in the classroom can be categorized by the students; students should be asked to watch for clues in the text that help them to categorize the film, i.e., the type of music heard, the angle of the shots or even the colors of the costumes and setting. At the end of the film, the class as a whole can discuss the film and come to a consensus regarding the category.

Media language is slightly harder to work with in the classroom. Though viewers are able to understand the basic meaning of the film, it is not often that we, the viewers, actually try to analyze the symbols and narrative structure inherent in all films. Just like in all pieces of art, the film is full of symbols and underlying meanings that can be revealed. For example, at the beginning of *The Lion King*, there is a scene where the sun is rising. The symbol of the sun has many meanings that can be discussed with the class, such as the giving of life, the dawning of a new day – both in its literary and figurative meaning – or just the beginning of something new. Another point of discussion can be the different colors that are used in *The Lion King*: the good characters are in bright colors while the bad guys are dark brown or black. It is possible to look at the significance of these colors and how they relate to the narrative.

Media representation may be the most interesting of the media literacy techniques to work on in the classroom. All films relate to reality in different ways; they do not replicate or mirror reality, but construct their own (Bazalgette, 1992). This is especially true of films that are based on historical events, such as *Pearl Harbor* or *The Bridge over the River Kwai*. In these kinds of films, it is up to the teacher to help the students to distinguish between fact and fiction, otherwise the students may believe that what happens in the film is actually historical fact. One way is to prepare a list of characters or events and have the students conduct a search on the Internet to see which are historically real and which are not.

Another area that is interesting to work on in the classroom is how literary works are represented when they are transferred to the film medium. The class can first read an excerpt from a story such as Harry Potter, discuss how they as a class would represent the scene in a film, and then see how this excerpt has actually been transferred. It is also possible to take two versions of the same film and see how they compare or differ. For example, the class could look at two different versions of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Finally, as can be seen, there is no need to be scared of taking films into the classroom. Next time you want a slightly different kind of lesson, don't worry: take a film into class!

Some Examples of Worksheets on Media Literacy

Shakespeare in Love

You are about to see the film *Shakespeare in Love*. While watching the film, pay attention to the following characters – Who are they, and what happens to them in the film?

William Shakespeare, Richard Burbage, Phillip Henslowe, Viola De Lesseps, Christopher Marlowe, Edward Alleyn, Lord Wessex, Hugh Fennyman, Queen Elizabeth I

After watching the film, answer the following:

1. What did you learn about Elizabethan life from the film?
2. Which of the above characters actually existed in real life? Use reference materials to check your answers.
3. What do you think is the purpose of mixing historical and imaginary facts?
4. Is there any way we, as the audience, can know what is reality and what is make-believe?
5. How would you categorize the film? What genre is it?

Wag The Dog

The film *Wag the Dog* looks at the manipulation of the public using the media. While watching the film, try to focus on the following aspects and then answer the questions:

1. What is the purpose behind the manipulation of the media?
2. How is the manipulation of the media supposed to help the president?
3. Describe the different ways in which the media is manipulated in order to produce the desired results?
4. What is the role of the production team in the film? How do they regard their work?
5. What results does the production team get?
6. Do you think that something like the events in the film could happen in real life? Give reasons for your answer.

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LITERATURE IS THE QUESTION MINUS THE ANSWER *

By Adele Raemer

As educators, we have often heard the saying, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." I believe that developing autonomous learners is **the** most meaningful challenge that faces educators today. A people's literature is the mirror of its culture. In the global village of the 21st century, where we interact with people from other countries on a daily basis through the various media, it is important to teach our learners how to develop their understanding of other cultures. It is for these reasons that I have chosen to confront this challenge.

I am of the opinion that through literature, our learners can receive training that will help them improve their English language skills in general, while encouraging them to make responsible, informed choices and decisions about their education. All this can be done in a way that will motivate each learner to learn, appealing to a variety of learning styles according to each learner's own pace. This workshop will present one aspect of the model that my colleagues and I are developing at *Ma'ale Habsor Regional School*, in the field of encouraging learner choice when studying their English literature program.

While reading through literature on the topic, I came across an article by Susan L. Stern, a researcher who wrote for the *ETF* in 1987. She wrote that, while literature played a prominent role in the English curricula of many non-English speaking countries at the time – including Israel – no comprehensive research on the role and teaching of literature in EFL had yet been carried out. Nor had there been many resources to aid teachers in presenting the material that was included in the many anthologies that had been published and were being used at the time. She went on to complain of a lack of preparation in the area of literature teaching in TESL/TEFL programs (at least in the U.S.) and finally, she bemoaned, there was a blatant absence of clear-cut objectives to define the role that literature was intended to play in ESL/EFL instruction.

Through a perfunctory search on the Internet, I was unable to find anything more recent from that author; however, I do believe that the books that have come on the market in the past decade would please her. If she has any knowledge of the current EFL trends regarding the role that literature instruction plays in the English curriculum in Israel today, she would even be impressed.

Today's EFL literature market has an abundance of wonderful books enlightening teachers of varied, interesting, communicative ways of bringing literature alive in the EFL classroom. However, from what I have managed to glean from the literature anthologies that have been written in the past decade for the Israeli classroom they still, for the most part, keep the teacher in the center of the process. Little choice is given to the learners. Their literature program still depends on the choices that their teacher has made.

The model I present here takes the improvements that have been made in the field of EFL since Susan L. Stern's critical article, and enhances them even further. The rationale is based on several aspects of learning theories, specifically:

- learner choice and how it affects learner motivation
- learner responsibility
- learner-centered (as opposed to teacher-centered) learning
- learning styles and the importance of recognizing and relating to them
- learning centers and the opportunities they hold for literature learning
- the role played by literature and reading in language learning
- suitability for the new English curriculum

For the past three years, in *Ma'ale Habsor*, the comprehensive school where I teach, our staff have been developing an independent learning center. Some of you may have seen that presentation; others may have been among the tens of English teachers who have visited it in the past three years. Still more of you may have gotten a very small taste of it in the most recent *ETJ* (June, 2002, #54, pp.60-61). The section for the junior high school is theme-based, and was presented at the ETAI winter conference last year. The section for the high school is based on learner-centered literature studies: last year we first piloted the section for short stories, and this year I am developing the section for poetry.

For the purposes of this article, I will not go into the theory; rather, I will present a model which I have developed for a learner-centered poetry program which I am in the process of piloting. It is NOT final, and FAR from perfect. However, I feel it represents the direction which literature teaching should take – at least in my school, and at least for this teacher. The following "Seven Steps for Reading and Analyzing a Poem" could be read with relation to "Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost.

Fire and Ice

By Robert Frost

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

Seven Steps for Reading and Analyzing a Poem

* **Step One: Read the poem**
  Use a dictionary to look up every word you are not sure about. If you think it looks strange in the sentence, look it up in the dictionary to be sure. Don't forget about the title. Read the entire poem to yourself out loud.
* **Step Two: Paraphrase**
  Rewrite the poem in your own words, as you understand it – in English or in Hebrew. What is the poem about?
* **Step Three: Connotation**
  Try and understand the poem more deeply. Mark the rhyming pattern. (Reading it out loud will help you find more rhymes). Pay attention to anything that is repeated – either individual words or complete phrases. Find the poetic devices – listed in your worksheet – in the poem you are reading, and try to understand how they affect the poem. Mark them in the poem. Add the poetic devices to your *Terms Used in Poetry* page. Look for other devices you have learned in the past, as well.
* **Step Four: Attitude**
  Who is the speaker in the poem? Pay attention to changes in attitude or voice. Usually, the speaker develops with the poem, and ends up in a different place from where he or she began.
* **Step Five: Theme**
  Decide what the message of the poem is. Look for the plot, the subject and the theme (what the speaker is saying about each subject). Try to write a complete sentence identifying what idea the speaker (narrator) is saying.
* **Step Six: Read about the poet**
  Find out information about the poet through the internet.
* **Step Seven: Read the poem again**
  Look back at what you wrote in Step Two. Has your interpretation of the poem changed? Does the biographical information change/affect your understanding of the poem? Reword your paraphrase in light of what you have learned.

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The "Seven Steps" are adapted from "Poetry Analysis Fact Sheet": http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/analysis.html

*The title is a quotation from an article by Ronald Barthes, New York Times, 1978

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BIBLIOTHERAPY – A TECHNIQUE TO BUILD SELF-ESTEEM

By Chaya Weinberg

Educators often read to children. Bibliotherapy is a technique one can use to help build up the self-esteem of a youngster. As the listener hears a story, he identifies with the hero, and releases emotions as he realizes that the hero has similar fears and/or problems. Thus the teacher begins a process where, through different stories and well-planned comments and questions, the reader will gain insight into his dilemma and learn to cope with and adjust to his situation.

Teachers have claimed, "But I am not a therapist". In the formal sense, perhaps not. But we, as teachers, guidance counselors, librarians and parents, are agents of change and progress and education for these precious youngsters. We have the possibility, the responsibility, the challenge to not only teach our "subject", whatever our specialty may be, but to help mold each pupil into as full blossoming a human being as can be.

Books are a tool always available to us. We use them in our classrooms for pleasure, for adventure, for motivation, for relaxation, for relief, for escape. The Greeks knew back in the 1800's that "Books are medicine for the soul". Thus, they created the concept of Bibliotherapy: biblio – meaning "book", and atteid – meaning "healing".

The preparation for the reading of stories using the principles of Bibliotherapy has the power to help a student identify with the situation/problem of the hero, subconsciously release emotions as he finds out that he is not alone or so different, and gradually gain insight. When students feel better about themselves, their self-esteem and confidence rises, and thus there is an undoubtedly better chance of successful learning!

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THUNDERSTRUCK OR LIT-UP? THE LANGUAGE OF LEARNING (AND LOVE!)

By Sarah Zimin

This paper describes some of the ways language can affect emotions, thinking and behavior and how teachers can apply these to their own use of language. It was presented in an experiential workshop given at The Winter ETAI Conference in Beersheba 2002. The purpose here is to provide explicit information on various aspects of language use that were experienced implicitly in the workshop so that teachers have a succinct but comprehensive picture of the ways they can modify their talk to achieve their educational goals. After introducing the subject, I describe the power of sensory words, some techniques of word-magic through sentence suggestion of psychologist Milton Erickson and psychiatrist Giorgi Lozanov and finally, the techniques of reflecting and mirroring metaphors (from Carl Rogers and David Lean respectively).

The Power of Language

Let me begin by recalling the old defensive taunt that children use when called names by their peers:

> STICKS AND STONES can break my bones
> But NAMES can never hurt me!

It is a brave retort but happens to be quite inaccurate. The reality is reflected more in my version of this saying:

> STICKS AND STONES can break your bones
> But bones can quickly mend.
> A cruel WORD will break your heart,
> A pain that never ends!

One has but to ask any person about their early learning experiences to quickly discover that all have been permanently affected by words that careless adults, often our first teachers, said to us. These labels often affect the way we see ourselves throughout life – and in every aspect of life, work, career, relationships – and not only our ability to learn. It is, therefore, advisable that teachers realize their great responsibility in this arena and choose their words carefully. However, this is a task easier said than done.

A further example that shows just how powerful the words we use are is a simple but always amazing exercise. In it one combines language with a mental image and compares this to the effectiveness of physical practice. The exercise demonstrates the superiority of a suggestive mental command. To test this yourself, stand with feet comfortably apart and immobile, so that it is only the top part of the body that moves throughout the exercise. Outstretch one arm and move it around clockwise to see how far around you can stretch, and note to which point behind you can point to in this way. Come back and relax. Rest and then repeat the exercise to see if the practice has helped you move around even further, all the time keeping your feet firmly planted. You will probably find that, yes, the practice does help: you stretch even a little bit more than before. You can do this several times, but still keeping your feet immobile so that the reference point as to how far you have stretched remains the same. Now, still standing in the same place, rest and close your eyes, breathe deeply and imagine yourself as one of those dolls on a stick that can twirl around and around 360 degrees. (In imagining oneself as this doll, one is saying to oneself that it is possible to spin around 360 degrees!) Then one does the test again and amazingly one is able to stretch around significantly more than just by doing the physical practice.

People are always surprised by this. The implications of it are mind-boggling. For a start, we get an understanding of what is meant by the "inner game of tennis" – the idea that our mental representation (created largely by the language we use but also by our ability to visualize) is our most powerful achievement tool. Students who feel they will be successful (i.e. they say to themselves they are successful) do indeed succeed. Those whose inner representation is one of failure, don't. Teachers, in my opinion, have the responsibility not of sorting students into those that can and those that can't but of creating learning experiences in which all students can succeed. And words are their instruments of success.

The critical ingredient in determining whether our words encourage or wound is the intention of the speaker and, even more importantly, how the listener perceives the intention of the speaker. Words can leave a person "lit up" with thoughts of their own possibilities or "thunderstruck" with the pain of their own inadequacy. Obviously, at least from my worldview, a teacher's role is to "enlighten", "lighten" loads and "light up" others with their own potential. Yet neither common ways of talking nor inaccurate praise do the

job. Students see through any even well-intentioned deception. By "intention", I mean what the speaker intends the student to do (and to be able to do as a consequence). It is keeping our intention and attention aimed at educating. The task of choosing and using our words for educational purposes is far more complex to achieve than may appear, yet it is well worth the effort of learning as it is a tool that transforms learning. The tools are more than having good intentions, hoping the students will succeed. These are linguistic tools but derived from understanding how the human mind works. Thus good teaching must again interface with psychology, the science of the mind, to learn more about the subtle effects of words on the listener's internal image and consequent behaviors.

Word Modalities

Neuro-Linguistic Proceeding, one of the modern branches of psychology or psycholinguistics, has some interesting insights about how to choose words to create rapport with one's listeners. NLP has shown that different people have different input preferences, that is, different ways they prefer to process incoming messages. These preferences are connected to the three main sensory modalities: visual, auditory and kinesthetic, VAK for short. The kinesthetic modality includes movement, touching, tasting, smelling and feelings, and it is dominant in most children until school age. Even after that, about 60% of all learners are basically kinesthetic learners. Yet, clearly, the traditional educational system favors auditory and visual learners. Research by the New York Board of Education shows that most teachers are themselves visual learners, yet present information in an auditory manner as is customary in traditional educational settings! The aspect of learning modalities I want to emphasize here is that words themselves carry sensory connotations, and without too much effort smart teachers can use all three kinds of sensory words in order to reach all the students in their classes.

An example of doing this is to ask students if they hear what you are saying (auditory), see what you mean (visual) and understand the idea (kinesthetic). Most descriptive words convey one of the sensory modalities, and teachers can purposefully pepper their language with these. Another example: "I am glad (K) to see (V) everyone listening (A) to the song. Can you hear the bells (A) in the background? Can anyone picture the people (V) in the song? What actions are they doing? (K) How are they feeling? (K)" Of course, in talking with individual students one should try to talk to them using the modality they prefer. How can you know? You can do a VAK quiz with the class to identify who prefers what modality or you can listen to the words they themselves use and stay with the same modality in your responses to them.

We all use all modalities. Most people predominantly use two of the modalities regularly and are weaker in the third. A few people are single modality processors. These are usually the ones that are having some difficulty in class. They are the ones for whom the teacher must "translate" all instructions and information into the modality they need to understand. In NLP, these students are called "translators". Translators need teachers to teach and re-teach the material through their preferred modality. For example, if a student is a visual learner and the class learned something through a kinesthetic game, the "translator" would benefit by getting an explanatory chart, preferably before the game. Of course, a good teacher tries to present all material in all three modalities, but translators usually require a lot more repetition in their preferred modality and a teacher needs to provide a variety of activities to provide sufficient repetition for such students, such as drawing a diagram, sorting pictures, seeing a map, or matching picture and word. Chances are that the teacher's awareness of a translator's needs and her taking appropriate actions to translate and repeat the necessary information will be enough to shift a student from being an inadequate to being a successful participant in the class. Here the teacher's positive intention towards a student gets verbally and behaviorally realized.

Sentence Suggestion

The crux of good teaching is good classroom management, and the key to the latter is using "effective-suggestive directives" (my term). These are sentences (utterances) that get the students to do what you want them to do without them realizing they are being directed. It is indirect control through suggestion. Indirect control is more effective than direct control for it gives people a sense of choice. The effect of using such sentences is sometimes almost magical, so it has been dubbed "Magical Management" (Lonny Gold, 1996). These directives can also be used to suggest to the learners that they are able to succeed in the assigned tasks, and thus they are also a teaching/learning tool.

There are several different kinds of effective-suggestive directive.

The simplest to apply is **permissive suggestion**. As the name implies, the addressee is instructed to do something as if being given permission for something he wants to do. "You may now open your books" rather than the direct order "Open your books." Permissive directives use the modals may, might, can, could and don't need to. Theoretically, they could be refused, as with the permissive directive "You might want to look at the picture on page ten" – a student could say: "No, I don't want to" – but they tend to be quite impelling in practice. Giving the appearance of choice tends to circumvent the need for resistance and to create a positive atmosphere in the learning environment. Neville (1992) gives some more examples that we can adopt, such as: "You don't need to talk now" instead of "Be quiet!"

Related, but a bit more complex, are **implied suggestions**. These are a particularly effective teaching tool as they clearly imply success. Neville (1992) gives the following examples:

- "You may not understand this poem fully on the first reading" (implies that you'll understand it on a subsequent reading).
- "You won't want to start writing immediately" (implies you'll want to start writing soon).
- "I don't suppose you can work properly while I'm staring at you" (implies that when I look away you will work)

Unfortunately, our perception of ourselves and our abilities has come through a long process of unconsciously hearing such suggestions. If you tell a child directly that he will never be a good writer because he is left-handed, the statement can be thought and talked about and refuted. But if the same message is given indirectly, through implied suggestion expressed either verbally or through facial expression, the child absorbs the suggestion unconsciously and gradually comes to accept it as truth. But fortunately, this can also be true of positive suggestion. And Milton Erickson showed that an educator can use implied suggestion with the intention to improve behavior. In a way, the teacher tricks the student into compliance, but for his own good. "While you are in class, it may be a bit tricky to concentrate" is heard as a suggestion that he will be able to concentrate when out of class, doing his homework.

An excellent technique for really making sure the student will not act on his natural resistance to doing what he is told is through giving **multiple tasks**. For example:

"Yonatan, when you've put the game away, could you come over here and help me organize mine?" This has a quite different effect from the three separate commands: "Put the game away", "Come here" and "Help me". It is easy for Yonatan to refuse separate tasks, but refusal of combined tasks is complicated, especially if one of them is attractive. The effort it takes him to decide which of them he is refusing is itself a deterrent to refusal. He might not do the tasks willingly, but that may seem easier than going through the effort of analyzing the situation created by the multiple task request.

A related innovation of Erickson's, particularly useful in dealing with a resistant or even antagonistic person, was the use of the **bind**. A bind is offering a person a choice of two alternatives, both of which we want him to do. So if I want a student to do a page of grammar exercises and I want the room swept I offer him the choice. Neither is very appealing to him but in the bind he feels he must choose one, although logically he could refuse to do either. Another example teachers commonly use is asking the students if they want the test on Monday or Thursday. It binds them to wanting the test! The **double bind** works in an even more inevitable manner by giving the person no logical way out. For example, if a student is doing some undesirable behavior we could say, "I suggest you stop that, or you are going to feel silly." It puts the student in the situation that if he continues with the disruptive behavior, he makes a fool of himself (he is silly) and if he stops he is compromised, too, in giving in to the teacher, but it may be the preferable choice. "You will probably learn to do this in spite of yourself" is a double bind suggestion for success. Whatever the student does he feels he will learn. Again, the intention of the teacher to encourage behavior that is desirable and positive in the eyes of the student is what makes the double bind a helpful measure. The technique lends itself to coercive manipulation, and this is its danger. However, in a large class situation the need to have co-operation from all the students with minimum fuss makes the use of binds and double binds a welcome addition to the teacher's tool kit.

Double messages or embedded commands are similar to double binds, except that most people use them naturally and they are not very effective. Actually, they probably should be avoided by the careful teacher. When we say "Try to do it", we may be intending to give an encouraging message but we are also giving the double message of "This is hard and you probably won't succeed." Or, "Try hard not to remember what I am about to say to you" leaves the listener in a predicament about which command to follow – to remember or forget. Another common pitfall is telling someone "Don't do X." The embedded command is "Do X", the very action we wanted to prevent. Parents are amazed that their children do precisely what they have just been told not to do, not realizing that it is a natural processing error. A good reminder to educators is the saying: "Don't say don't – say Do! "

There are many forms of effective suggestion. I have mentioned five above. Here is an activity to practice recognizing the most effective-suggestive sentences.

Activity: Identifying empowering classroom syntax

The sentences below are adapted from Lonny Gold (1996). Check the alternative you think is more effective for teachers to use. You may want to circle your choice before checking with Lonny's comments below!

1a. What we're going to do is ...
1b. What you might like to do is ...
2a. Why don't you ... ?
2b. I want you to ...
3a. Many of you are tired so ...
3b. Is anybody feeling less energetic than usual?
4a. Have you ever done X?
4b. I have an exercise you'll love.
5a. Have you almost finished?
5b. Have you finished yet?
6a. This is going to be easy.
6b. Some of you may find this a bit tricky.
7a. Please don't write about ...
7b. Please avoid writing about ...

Lonny Gold says that telling people what they are going to do or what you want them to do or what feelings they will have are all invitations to resistance and non-cooperation. He therefore suggests that using the language of suggestion is more effective. The teacher needs to avoid using negatives such as "don't" and words that suggest that students aren't working quickly enough like "yet". The use of "some of you" allows the teacher to avoid possibly inaccurate overgeneralization.

Now check your choices again and then look at the end of the article to see if your choices agree with his.

Michael Grinder (1991) gives a further explanation about what happens when teachers utter negative sentences (that is, they focus on the negative behavior they want students to stop rather than the positive counterpart, even if the sentence is worded in a grammatical positive). The example he gives is: "There is entirely too much talk going on" (which is negative, even though grammatically positive). He advises teachers to follow such a negative with a positive sentence ("I need to have it quieter") or avoid the negative altogether. The last thing one says tends to be the part remembered, so a teacher wants to make sure that her utterances end with a positive suggestion. If one does inadvertently say a negative, one can quickly add a positive. Particularly effective is making a positive and then adding an "even more" positive ("The class is lovely and quiet. And now let's see if we can make it even more quiet so that you can hear me whispering.") This has the effect, according to Grinder, of inspiring students to greater mastery.

An entirely different way of using sentences is reflecting what a person has said in order to give him the feeling that he is understood and the possibility to expand on his self-expression. Reflection was the brain-child of the famous Carl Roger, who founded a new branch of psychology called "Client-Centered Therapy". The technique is a wonderful tool for teachers to encourage a student to talk and to indirectly correct mistakes. A student may say: "My brother he goes to university but he don't like it much." The teacher: "Oh, your brother goes to the university, does he, and he doesn't like it. What a shame! Does he go to the Hebrew Uni.? Students can also be taught to do this to each other. I have found they like it; they like the challenge, and the one being reflected likes to feel really listened to.

Teachers can also pay attention to the metaphors students use, and reflect these back to them to convey a sense of being really in tune with them. The work of psychologist David Grove (reported in Lawley & Tompkins, 2000) offers a special way of doing this that he calls "Clean Language". The word "clean" implies that one's response is an accurate reflection back to the

speaker of what they actually said and of their metaphors, with the addition of very few simple syntactic phrases such as 'when' and 'as'. In normal conversation, people tend to impose their own experiences and metaphors rather than really listen and help the other explore what it is they are saying and the implications of the metaphors they have been using. Exploring one's metaphors opens doors to new ways of understanding and new insights into one's old problems. Like binds, Clean Language is a therapeutic tool, but I have found it a natural extension to the practice of Roger's reflection. Students get very excited when they start paying attention to the metaphoric nature of their language. It becomes another tool for teachers to use in their own listening, and also an activity for the students to practice speaking and listening.

Concluding Remarks

Clearly, all the talk techniques I have mentioned can be used out of the classroom, too, with colleagues at school, with one's children and parents, and to great effect with one's partner. Many a relationship has been transformed by these relatively simple measures, so it is worthwhile practicing and using them everywhere. I call it the language of love! Nobody likes feeling lost (wrong modality) or being told what to do. Everybody likes and prospers from being given their preferred input modality, the chance to choose and the feeling of really being understood. You may want to start designing your teacher talk to include the features discussed here and to observe the difference they make in the effectiveness of your teaching. I would love to hear about your successes.

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Lonny Gold's answers to the most effective sentences: 1b 2a 3b 4a 5a 6b 7b

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USING THE SHELTERED INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION PROTOCOL (SIOP) TO PLAN AND ASSESS CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION IN AN EFL SETTING

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In this paper I will introduce the SIOP Model, describe one way of using it in a teacher-to-teacher peer coaching dyad, briefly cite the research foundation for the model, provide a rationale for deploying the model in an EFL setting, and provide evidence for adopting the model based on the results of 16 EFL teachers who attended my workshop at the ETAI winter conference, 2002.

What is the SIOP Model?

The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) (Echevarria, Vogt, Short, 2000) is a tool for planning, evaluating and improving instruction in classrooms where language and content objectives can be integrated. It is both a checklist and a protocol for assessment that has thirty features divided among eight components. One of the eight components is called Preparation. In its checklist format it looks like this:

Preparation

- Write content objectives clearly for students:
- Write language objectives clearly for students:
- Choose content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students.
  List them:
- Identify supplementary materials to use (graphs, models, visuals).
  List materials:
- Adapt content (e.g., text, assignment) to all levels of student proficiency.
  List ideas for adaptation:
- Plan meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts (e.g., surveys, letter writing, simulations, constructing models) with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking.
  List them:
  See Appendix: http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/edpractice/EPR3.pdf *(Used with permission. Short & Echevarria, 1999.)*

Teachers use the above checklist (in its full version) in order to plan their lessons. This same component (which includes six features) is used in a protocol for data collection during an observation and assessment event. It is important to note that what appears above is only a small section of the SIOP Model. Any serious implementation of the SIOP Model requires the formation of a study group which includes a practicum.

How can the SIOP Model help me?

Teachers who have studied the features of the SIOP Model begin to plan their lessons with a small number of features at first, and continue to add more features as they study more about them, reflect on their teaching and make their own decisions to improve in an intentional and systematic way.

Teachers who choose the SIOP Model to stretch their instructional skills often work with a coach. A coach can be a critical friend who is another teacher in your school, a teaching peer, a mentor, a coordinator, a staff development specialist, a school district administrator, a professor of education, a teacher trainer, or a researcher (Short, Hudec & Echevarria, 2002).

An experienced teacher often benefits from choosing another experienced teacher for a few different reasons. First, there is a foundation for a balance of power in the relationship that is not possible in relationships with school officials who are higher up the hierarchy. Second, in a teacher-to-teacher coaching model, each teacher is planning and self-assessing lessons, and collecting data on another teacher's lessons and assessing those. This dual role generates deeper insight into effective teaching and dramatic improvement when carried out in earnest. In the SIOP Model, data collection and peer reflection on the data drive improvements in subsequent lesson planning. Finally,

the teacher-to-teacher coaching model establishes a framework for ongoing collegiality characterized by teachers talking shop with one another. When this happens throughout a school, a potential paradigm shift occurs from hierarchical supervision to lateral supervision, from directives, assertions and mandates from the top to an unencumbered community of learners, and an open discussion of effective instruction unburdened by issues related to tenure (Glickman et al., 2001). Isn't this an important aim?

Reading, studying and implementing the model in a cumulative fashion is the research-tested route to instructional improvement. The SIOP Model does not cut corners. In fact, the complexity of language learning classrooms is reflected by the eight components and thirty features of the model. Anything less would not do justice to indicators of effective language instruction as identified through research (Short & Echevarria, 1999; Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2000; Guarino, Echevarria, Short, Schick, Forbes & Rueda, 2001; Short, Hudec, & Echevarria, 2002). Teachers and coaches who want to make real progress must both read and study the model and begin to slowly implement self-chosen parts of the model in a cumulative fashion.

How does the SIOP Model work in a teacher-to-teacher peer coaching dyad?

When teachers enter into a long-term, sustained program of professional development where the SIOP Model plays a central role in the planning, recording, and evaluating of indicators of effective instruction, teacher improvement progresses through a feedback loop (see figure 1).

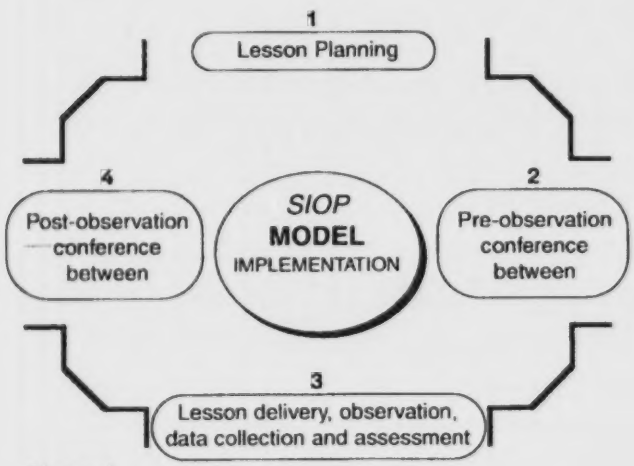

Figure 1.

At Point 1 in the above feedback loop, teachers plan their lessons. Content-based teachers often plan a lesson over several days in order to include all features of the SIOP model and thereby ensure effective instruction. This is especially true when project work is involved. Teachers model learning and studying strategies such as proper research methods, note-taking, summarizing, outlining, free-writing, mapping, paragraph organization, and oral presentation skills; furthermore, they may be modeling how to use presentation software, word processors, or web-design software. In textbook-based courses, teachers will lead a tour of a new chapter and incorporate listening, writing and higher order questioning tasks for students in order to provide an overview of themes and topics of study in an interactive way. Finally, SIOP planning requires the preparation of meaningful activities for your students, drawing up objectives aligned with your standards and benchmarks, assembling supplementary materials, often adapting materials for heterogeneous classes, identifying concepts and key vocabulary, designing activities which build on students' background and previous lessons, considering comprehensible input, learning strategies, interaction, language practice, application, lesson delivery, review and assessment (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2000).

At Point 2, teachers sit with a coach after designing the upcoming lesson, and talk about the lesson plan. While learning to implement the SIOP, this happens at least once a month. Teachers and assessment coaches usually only discuss one lesson per month, although in some schools there is a culture of ongoing discussion which is informal and unscheduled and which supports a natural staff development process that is egalitarian and non-judgmental. At the early stages of implementation, teachers often only implement some of the SIOP components and features. It is still useful, however, for assessment coaches and teachers to agree on the use of the entire protocol of all 30 features for collecting data (Point 3, Figure 1) since this will provide information about areas which could be included in future lessons and lead to planned, intentional growth that is driven by data collection, discussion and interpretation (Point 4, Figure 1). Notwithstanding the use of the entire SIOP rating scale, feedback and discussion focuses primarily on selected features.

Finally, SIOP teachers often agree to have one lesson a month videotaped by their assessment coaches, for further review, discussion, reflection and critique. Together, the videotape, the SIOP rating scale, and discussion generate the triangulation of reflection that has a powerful effect on the psychosocial elements of change and improvement.

At Point 3, teachers teach their SIOP lessons and coaches use the SIOP rating scale, and possibly a video camera on a tripod, to collect data during one session of the lesson. Coaches take notes throughout their observation and collect examples of any handouts. In some instances, examples of student work is copied and included in the data.

At Point 4, teachers and coaches discuss the data, Together, they set goals for the following month's lesson observation. The goals are usually some or all of the items that need improvement on the SIOP scale. In terms of conference procedure, it is best that a copy of the coach's comments, SIOP scaled evaluation, and videotape be given to the teacher within a day or two of the actual lesson, and at least a few days prior to the post-observation conference. Teachers then have time to reflect on the data. It is often helpful for teachers to view the videotape with a SIOP rating scale in hand in order to self-evaluate the videotaped lesson before they read the data from their coaches and, of course, before the post-observation conference.

The cycle begins again (Point 1, Figure 1), and high implementers begin the process of integrating new goals in subsequent lessons that are unobserved, too.

In a peer-coaching model (see Appendix 1), each teacher needs a minimum of 125 minutes of release-time per month if each partner (critical friend) is to get 45 minutes to observe each other, 20 minutes for a pre-observation conference, and 20 minutes for a post-observation conference. In any case, the gradual integration of the SIOP Model usually requires teachers and coaches to organize a study group of original source material that delineates the model. Of particular interest in this regard is the book "Making Content Comprehensible for English Language Learners: The SIOP Model by Echevarria, Vogt and Short (2000)." This book includes a selected bibliography with other important sources for future reflection and study by your group. It also includes a detailed description of each of the thirty SIOP features, classroom vignettes that illustrate strengths and weaknesses, the SIOP lesson planner, and the SIOP scale with instructions on how to calculate points.

A word on the research

The SIOP Model is the product of collaboration between researchers and middle school teachers in the United States who have non-native English language learners in their classrooms. The model's reliability and validity was established with the help of four university experts in content-based language education from three major universities in southern California. The SIOP Model has been identified as a highly reliable and valid measure of the indicators of effective instruction for English language learners (Guarino, Echevarria, Short, Schick, Forbes, & Rueda, 2001).

Student improvement in classrooms where the SIOP Model was implemented was compared to classrooms where it was not implemented. Greater student achievement was identified in both narrative and expository writing samples from students in classrooms where teachers were implementing SIOP lesson planning than in classrooms where they were not doing so (http://www.cal.org/crede/si.htm).

Implementation in an EFL setting—rationale

Although there is at the time of this writing no research on the implementation of the SIOP Model in an EFL setting, the hegemony of similar standards and trends in

EFL-ESL education, the cross-fertilization of information, theory and methodology in our age of information and the intelligent eclecticism practiced by teacher-practitioners of language education provide a foundational rationale for experimental implementation of the SIOP Model in EFL settings. The advantages for research are clear and obvious: when one tool such as the SIOP Model is adopted in several sites worldwide, powerful research is potentially generated through the comparison and contrast of data about the same or similar features.

Evidence of alignment from 16 EFL teachers at the ETAI Winter Conference

Prior to my presentation of the SIOP Model, 16 teachers in attendance at my short talk at the ETAI Winter Conference (2002), were given a writing prompt and asked to generate a list of important components they would want to include in each of their lessons (see Appendix 2).

Although the ETAI teachers did not generate all eight components and 30 features of the SIOP Model of indicators of effective instruction, everything they did generate is either a feature or a component. This piece of evidence, albeit small, would seem to indicate that the implementation of the SIOP Model in an EFL setting in the State of Israel should be conducted in order to determine if teaching and, by implication, learning can be improved.

The experimental design of such a research project would require two to three years of meetings, one per-month between relevant stakeholders/implementers, e.g., teachers, counselors, English inspectors, Masters students, researchers or professors of education, and of course long-term staff development.

Finally, the data generated through such a project and the serious collaboration among stakeholders could not help but provide insight into a model of instructional improvement and best practices. Teachers from Israel and abroad could avail themselves of the wealth of data and reflection for the further improvement of language education everywhere.

Appendix 1

Suggested Release-Time for a Teacher-to-Teacher Peer Coaching Model with SIOP

Meeting	Purpose	Release Time (minutes per month)
Pre-observation conference between teacher A and teacher B.	Setting primary focus for teacher A's lesson; choosing data collection instrument; reviewing teacher A's SIOP Lesson Planning Guide.	20 minutes (both A & B)
Teacher A observes teacher B.	Non-interventionist behavior by B in order to collect data for A.	45 minutes (only B)
Post-observation conference between teacher A and teacher B.	Discussion of data; using data as foundation for new goal setting.	20 minutes (both A & B)
Pre-observation conference between teacher A and teacher B.	Setting primary focus for teacher B's lesson; reviewing teacher B's SIOP Lesson Planning Guide.	20 minutes (both A & B)
Teacher A observes teacher B	Non-interventionist behavior by A in order to collect data for B.	45 minutes (only A)
Post-observation conference between teacher A and teacher B.	Discussion of data; using data as foundation for new goal setting.	20 minutes (both A & B)
		Total release time per teacher per month = 125 minutes.

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Appendix 2:
Components of Effective Classroom Instruction

Important components of classroom instruction identified by 16 EFL teachers (ETAI Winter Conference, 2002)	Alignment with SIOP Model concepts (Sherris, 2002)
Common ground	Building background
Resources	Materials & adaptation
Visuals	Visuals, realia, hands-on tasks
Cooperative Activity	Interaction & variety of groupings
Projects	Meaningful activities
Using different cultures as resources	Building background
Student contributions	Activities for students to apply content and language knowledge
Vocabulary development	Key vocabulary & Concepts from content area
Language development	Language objectives
Reports by students & discussion	Integration of speaking, listening, reading and writing
Independent learning, activities, games & songs which create common denominators	Meaningful activities & content area objectives; language objectives; hands-on materials; integrated language modalities/skills
Literature & folktales from student culture, Middle East & English cultures; likewise, relevant history, geography and cultural input from background cultures and Middle East cultures.	Meaningful activities, building background & content area objectives
Parent and grandparent involvement	Building background
Language & content area assessment	Review/assessment

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Helpful websites: Integrating language learning with academic content

www.cal.org www.cal.org/crede/si/htm www.crede.ucsc.edu
www.cal.org/ericcll/teachers/teachers.pdf http://www.tesol.org

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YOSEF

By Genia Berman

Yosef walked into class ten minutes late. He started saying hello to all his friends, ignoring the class and me, the teacher. When confronted, he pulled out a note from the secretary allowing him in. The choices I felt I had to deal with the situation were:

a. Throw him back out, fight him and his friends while doing so, and lose ten more minutes of the lesson.
b. Ignore the situation.
c. Find a way to minimize the impact of this recurring event.

When the goal of all English teachers in Israel was to teach a certain number of grammar rules, the choice would have been "a". There is no way to teach frontally without losing an infinite amount of time on behavior problems; you have to solve most, and then go on with your teaching. Grammar rules have to be taught frontally; they have to be drilled and rehearsed, and need class attention.

When the goal of all English teachers in Israel was to teach communicating skills, the only way to combat the above behavior was to insist that greetings be performed in English. This way, whatever was being taught at a given moment was put aside, and greetings were rehearsed. This was not too bad, under the circumstances, but it encouraged this unacceptable behavior; it gave students the wrong kind of attention, and some of them exploited it.

The new curriculum's emphasis lets me go to option "c". Since the main thing the new curriculum demands of the students is to get to the next stage (benchmark) individually and produce their own projects – to be presented to their peers and teachers – the first thing I do at the beginning of the school year is to set realistic personal goals for each student. I make sure those students know, understand and agree with those goals and with the work demanded of them in the framework of that goal. Once this is set, all students walk into class and start to work. All I have to do is to check that each one is on the right track and let them go. I walk around the class and help out, and then, after about half of the lesson is gone, I give 5 to 15 minutes of frontal explanation on whatever new thing came up that day, or talk about a subject I have been planning to emphasize.

Now in walks Yosef. He walks into a class full of students busy with "their thing". More often than not he can hardly see me because I am bent over some student or other explaining something. He goes over to his friend, who greets him quickly and goes back to his own work. He gets about zero attention from the process until the class is almost over and I recheck attendance. At that point he is told that 10 minutes have been deducted from his overall attendance record, and that's the end of the story. Every time a lesson is finished, the students are requested to write the percentage of time they felt they have put into studies during the lesson. They seldom lie: it is 100% so often, that they amaze themselves.

This is only one example of the benefits of the new system. Truth be told is that I like it because it suits my sense of teaching. I have always felt that students are individuals, and should be treated as such. I had been giving background culture to my students for years before it became part of the curriculum, often in Hebrew, in spite of the previous dogma against use of the mother tongue. I always felt that motivating the students to learn, making it fun and interesting enough for them to try and overcome the hard parts, was 99% of winning the battle.

I teach in a school which accepts students from ultra religious yeshivas, who've had no English schooling at all until they come to us in 9th, 10th or even 11th grade. Except for a very few individuals who have severe learning disabilities or other problems which prevent them from getting anywhere scholastically, they all end up with a *Bagrut* in English, at least on a three-point level. The new system will enable many more of them to get even further. Until now they had to choose between three and four points. If they were in between, they would often go for the three points, being afraid of failing the four-point exam and ending up with nothing. Now they can do the A, B and C levels before the end of the 12th school year, and then try for levels D, E and even F, without losing what they have already. Or they

can retry the level they had failed before, making them feel it worthwhile to go on studying and applying themselves for their remaining school time.

Things are still in the works. There are many problems that have to be straightened out, starting with the assessment of class work, and ending with the "external" students who will not be able to present a project and will have to rely on the same kind of exam they had until now. The semantics of the new curriculum is something I personally find to be a waste of my time, better utilized to remember the students' names rather than new names for old things. But the main problem, as I see it, is that too many teachers feel that they have to teach a "class". If that is the way you feel, please change the subject you're teaching. In teaching a tool like a language, you have to teach the student, and not the class, and thus the focus has to be switched.

How you do precisely that is a good way to fill up the next twenty or so ETAI conferences.

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TEACHER: Why are you late?
WEBSTER: Because of the sign.
TEACHER: What sign?
WEBSTER: The one that says, "School Ahead, Go Slow."

TEACHER: Cindy, why are you doing your maths sums on the floor?
CINDY: You told me to do it without using tables!

TEACHER: Willy, name one important thing we have today that we didn't have ten years ago.
WILLY: Me!

BLACK PROTEST POETRY

By Joan Orkin

Ever since the emergence of Romantic poetry, it has been traditional amongst large numbers of educationists, as well as society in general, to hold the endeavors of the poet apart from society. He is regarded as artist, aesthete, and private explorer of inward understanding. In the classroom, we believe that the poet's vision can be understood by the sensitive reader familiar with poetic techniques.

By contrast, introducing students to Black Poetry can explode this sense that poetry entails only the esoteric and the private. Black poetry is primarily social in its concerns. This takes us back to the roots of poetry. Historically, poets have been cherished as elders and leaders who have been given the latitude to comment on and criticize their societies. In African society, the poetic figure is known as the praise singer, or the "imbongi". The imbongi's poetry is not inward and private; it is concerned with the ruler and the political and social fabric. The roots of British poetry, the ballad and the epic poetry of Beowulf, are also concerned with community struggles and with tribal and social origins. Oral traditions continued, via troubadours and folk singers, to pass communal wisdoms down from generation to generation.

It is with the imbongi and the troubadour that the exciting black poetry of Sharpeville and Soweto might be said to connect. Such poetry does not privilege transcendental longings, or spiritual or psychological interiority – the "private ache". These poets deal with themselves as part of a larger social and political fragment. They often perform their poetry at public gatherings. It is true that this poetry is written in English, but its ties with the traditions of African oral poetry are clear. As the noted South African novelist and academic Zeke Mphahlele once wrote, for writers within South Africa English was the language of resistance against apartheid injustice.

Teaching such poetry in the classroom can widen the horizon of students, some of whom at least are inclined to view poetry as an effete activity or one primarily aesthetic and unworldly. I attempt to take students on such a journey by beginning with examples of romantic and transcendental poetry and then contrasting these with instances of a more contemporary socially and politically based poetics. I begin with two famous instances of western poetry – "Daffodils", by William Wordsworth, and "The Hollow Men", by T. S. Eliot – both of which explore the inward private experience of the poet. For Wordsworth, the search is colored by pantheism, a need to find evidence of his God and his meaning within the world of nature. For Eliot, the modern world and the modern city are places of hollowness, within which he longs for personal and Christian salvation.

South African Black poetry, on the other hand, proposes concern with the urban, the social and the political as fulcrum for meaning. Much of it is written for public performance – the sense is that these poets speak with and on behalf of their people. Traditional poetic devices are used to fit these particular circumstances, but the voices are often immediately dramatic and emotional, honest and accessible. I begin with an example of the work of a South African poet concerned with the state's imprisonment of suspected enemies, some of whom subsequently fell to their deaths from John Vorster Square, a skyscraper used also as a police station in central Johannesburg where political prisoners were taken for interrogation.

In Detention

Chris van Wyk

He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself while washing
He slipped from the ninth floor
He hung from the ninth floor
He slipped on the ninth floor while washing
He fell from a piece of soap while slipping
He hung from the ninth floor
He washed from the ninth floor while slipping

Van Wyk captures the ambiguity of these deaths, which the police claimed were suicides, by offering a multiplicity of excuses all built on word play with a simple statement of cause of death. His manipulation of essentially the same sentence throughout bitterly and brilliantly parodies the excuses and manipulative claims of the police. The use of repetition, on the other hand,

emphasizes the determined emphasis of concealment, even as it underlines the frequency of these terrible incidents. But the poem is moving in a profound way as well, for the repetition of the third person pronoun "he" at the beginning of each sentence underlines the removal of identity which accompanies prejudice, racism and cruelty. In this poem, Van Wyk is directly engaged with the extent to which it is the political state that threatens and indeed murders the individual, even as his parody insists repeatedly on the value of each individual life so ruthlessly dismissed in word as well as action.

Mongane Wally Serote was a poet who was banned in South Africa and for many years lived in exile. The poem I want to look at now is, again, one engaged with human beings within the social and political fabric. He writes it to a fellow poet, Don Mattera, who was also a banned person, which meant that his writing as well as his personal movement was severely restricted.

For Don M. – Banned
Mongane Wally Serote

it is a dry white season
dark leaves don't last, their brief lives dry out
and with a broken heart they dive down gently
headed for the earth,
not even bleeding.
it is a dry white season brother,
only the trees know the pain as they still stand erect
dry like steel, their branches dry like wire,
indeed, it is a dry white season
but seasons come to pass.

Dedicated to Don Mattera, the poem gives him voice by referring to him not only in the title but in the term "brother", reminding the audience or reader of his existence even though his voice has been silenced.

The "dryness" referred to in this poem contrasts with Eliot's "dry voices", which denote an inner, private and spiritual meaninglessness. Here, on the other hand, the "drought" is caused by persecution, hatred and fear. The "brief lives" of the subjects of this oppression "dry out" with "broken heart(s)". We think not only of the leaves which fall to the earth, but of the bodies in Van Wyk's poem, who know pain as they bravely tried to "stand erect."

The use of the image of a bare tree here also contrasts with the use of nature in Wordsworth's poem. There it is used to indicate the discovery and acquisition of meaning, but in this poem the bare tree applies to the barrenness of a political system that invalidates the individual. The diction of "white", "dry", "steel" and "pain" point clearly to the system's racist underpinnings. As in Wordsworth, the image of nature brings with it recognition of the transience of seasons. But this time there is an implicit and then explicit assertion that apartheid political power, like all power, is itself subject to the poet's patient knowledge of the transitory: "Indeed it is a dry white season / but seasons come to pass."

Part of the power of this poetry resides in its simple collocation of diction and image. Serote's poem ends on the word "pass". This, in fact, was a loaded word in Apartheid South Africa. Whites were excluded from the humiliation of carrying what was a hated identity document called the "pass". If caught without it, the person was immediately arrested and thrown in a police van known as a Kwela-kwela. But the word "kwela kwela" is itself a pun, for it can also mean a particular African jive or dance tune. Finally, Dompas, another name for the identity document, means, in the Afrikaans of the apartheid rulers, "Dumb-pass". Here is Mafika Gwala's poem, entitled "Kwela ride":

Kwela ride
Mafika Gwala

Dompas!
I looked back
Dompas!
I went through my pockets
Not there.

They bit into my flesh (handcuffs).

Came the kwela-kwela
We crawled in.
The young men sang.
In that dark moment.

It all became familiar.

The directness of the poem in simple structure on the page and lack of surplus adornment suggest not only a fact of life but the fear, pain and bravery of the community in facing it. The bitter pun in the title points to the free movement of African music and joy, even as the political system attempts to imprison African movement in its demonically moving police vans. That pun is developed in the song which the young men sing as opposed to the kwela appropriated by apartheid incarceration. This poem records a moment of perception or understanding which is similar to

Wordsworth's poem but, once again, very different: the individual's recognition of the way in which a system of persecution has come to include him as only one of its entire oppressed community.

Lyricism in Black Poetry also comes from this juxtaposition of individual human beings, their sense of community, and the larger political and social systems in which they are located. In the fifties, Sophiatown, on the edge of Johannesburg, was a community that presented, in the midst of apartheid, a microcosm of multiracialism. It was inhabited by all different races and had a buzz, warmth and resistance which threatened the Apartheid government. So they evicted the inhabitants and demolished the whole complex of houses, shops and vibrant night life, erecting instead a white Afrikaans suburb in the exact place of Sophiatown called Triomf (triumph). Don Mattera grew up in and lived in Sophiatown until its destruction:

Song for Yesterday
Don Mattera

flames of silent longing
burn the door of my soul
giving spark to embers of memory
buried deep in the coffin of my mind
and nostalgia stirs from the cinders
to warm the liquid hands of time
which dripped our days to a close

now quiet waters mingle with urgent blood
pumping madly, surging full tide
into a lonely heart
filling it with a song for yesterday
and i can see them again
my family, my kinsmen
gentle eyes smiling through the mists
strong hands reaching out to touch me
breath burning breath with the glow of love
silent words lulling me to sleep
my people singing from the dust
giving shade to my childhood dreams

o sophia, sophiatown
you speak to me from the ashes of broken days
and from the twilight mist i hear a song rolling softly
softly rolling
a song for yesterday ....

There are many accounts of the vitality of Sophiatown. Father Trevor Huddlestone, amongst many others, has written of the special courage and humanity of the momentary period of Sophiatown in an otherwise bleak world. Mattera's poem captures the sense of loss for a destroyed community. He begins with a personal focus, talking about the emotions that have been extinguished but which are still buried "deep within the coffin" of his mind. However, his nostalgia moves away from the personal to the communal as, in his mind, he senses that he can "see them again." The memory of his "kinsmen and family" "smiling through the mists" and "singing from the dust" is completed by a closing stanza that sings for an urban memory that could not be further from the urban wastelands of Eliot.

I want to conclude this brief glance at black South African poetry by looking at another poem dedicated to Don Mattera, called "Song of Africa", by Achmat Dangor. This poem shows the merging of the communal and political struggle into an overt nationalism.

Song of Africa
Achmat Dangor
for Don Mattera

They want some verses
from you, poet,
to sing at the gravesides
of our heroes

speak of their struggle,
speak of their beauty,
oh, do not let this
dry and foreign tongue
choke your African sentiment

Let the rhythm
of your words
tell something
of their lives,
and ours

Let our song be heard
in the havens
of man and god,
you are an African
writing of Africans.

Finally, Dangor calls on Don Mattera in particular and all the troubadours of Africa to "sing" and to "speak" and to "let our song be heard". It is this communal conscience which separates the Soweto poets from the cannon of Western poetry.

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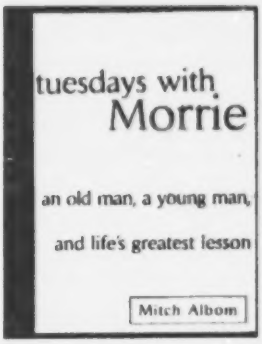
TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE – A STUDY IN HUMANISTIC PHILOSOPHY

By Janet Winter

Humanistic education focuses on the learner. The student's feelings, experiences, memories, needs, hopes and dreams are considered not only relevant to education but can be made part of the subject matter itself. My aim in this article is to clarify and exemplify the principles of Humanistic philosophy and education by making reference to Mitch Albom's book about his beloved humanistic teacher, Morrie, who made an enormous difference in his life.



Albom's first recollection of Morrie was of his affectionate reaction on graduation day 16 years before. This was Morrie, crying, hugging, extracting the most out of life, sharing his emotions with others and being a wonderful listener. He was a person who shared with his students his deteriorating health condition. He was a person who was aware of and in touch with his inner world, thus deciding to self-actualize himself even in his final days by making death his final project. Indeed, he was living according to his beliefs and not just stating them as lip service. He was educating for humanistic living and fostering the positive psychological growth of his students,

There are actually four humanistic models of teaching:

1. In the **developmental model**, the humanistic teacher goes according to the students' stage in life, and helps them make sense of their lives and the world around them. (Development of self)
2. The teacher in the **self-concept model** enhances the students' self-esteem by developing their values and helping them live according to their own expectations. (Self-actualization)
3. The **sensitivity** and **group-orientation model** allows the teacher to help youngsters be more open and sensitive with others and develop communication skills. (Quality of human interaction)
4. The humanistic teacher utilizes the **consciousness-expansion model** by stimulating the students' creativity and imagination, and by integrating body and mind, sensory awareness, and achieving higher or deeper levels of consciousness. (Developing awareness)

All of these four models can be seen in the humanistic activities suggested by the notion of "Sharing and Caring" (Moscowitz, 1978). The process of giving and receiving information about ourselves is the core of the foreign language curriculum, which builds trusting relationships and develops warmth and closeness between classmates as they acquire the target language. This is one example of building language programs incorporating humanistic models. Such programs truly motivate learners and give them a sense of being valued as human beings and as individuals. Actually, humanistic techniques are good for the teachers as well as the students in expanding mutual growth and self-awareness and in increasing creativity and realizing one's potential. Humanistic education involves learning to be better, feeling more human. If we don't teach for such goals, they just don't happen.

Let us look at some of the Principles of Humanistic Education, and exemplify these principles by making reference to Morrie Schwartz, who easily became my beloved teacher as well.

1. The first humanistic principle suggests providing an environment that facilitates the achievement of students' full potential. Looking at Morrie's class, we see such an ideal environment: countless books spread all around the room, suggesting there is much to learn; a large rug for a small group to sit on creates a calm and soothing atmosphere for learning together with kindness and patience. Morrie used to invite the students to become his friends, and surrounded them with an almost magical serenity.
2. The second principle shows that feelings must be recognized and actually used in the learning process. Teachers can provide content that is truly interesting and meaningful in which students study themselves by participating in personally reinforcing interaction. It was typical of Morrie to ask questions such as: "Have you found someone to share your heart with?" "Are you giving to your community?" "Are you at peace with yourself?" "Are you trying to be as human as you can be?" He recognized the student's feelings and used them in the learning process.

3. According to the third principle, healthy relationships with other classmates leads to a more conducive environment for learning – learning to understand, accept and respect others and to emphasize the positive qualities of others. Morrie used group processes in which students in the group interact with one another. He encouraged them to believe in what they feel, and to trust other people.
4. According to the fourth principle, human beings want to actualize their greatest potential and function to their fullest capacity, not only with their intellect but with their feelings as well. Mitch Albom used to call Morrie the coach, and indeed Morrie coached his students to actualize themselves, not only academically but emotionally as well. Morrie's philosophy was that the way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, to serving your community, and to creating something that gives your life purpose and meaning.

Undoubtedly, Morrie was a teacher who affected the entire course of Mitch Albom's life and probably that of other students as well. Indeed, we all need teachers like Morrie. I would like to share with you my own personal story of a teacher who had an enormous effect on the entire course of my life. I remember my English teacher from my first year in high school. I was mesmerized by her foreign glamour and was both flattered and surprised when she turned to me in front of the class and said, "Janet, I'm going to adopt you!" I strongly believe that her interest in me, her caring, our meetings every now and then, molded my life and influenced my decision to become an English teacher. I would also like to thank my mentor, Dr. Sarah Zimin, who has been there for me, encouraging, inspiring and sharing her wisdom.

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Exactly how long of a walk do you want me to take you on?

THE CHILD WITH ADD/ADHD: DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT AND CLASSROOM ACCOMMODATIONS

By Naomi Nahmias

Children with Attention Deficit Disorder (with or without hyperactivity) pose special challenges to parents and teachers, both in the classrooms and out. The child with a learning disability is affected in all three life ecologies; family, school and social. (Hammill and Bartel 1990, 349). Educators and parents often overlook this interplay and tend to over-emphasize the aspect of schooling and achievement.

What is ADD and what happens when it is not diagnosed and treated?

Researchers believe that Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) without hyperactivity is caused by deficiencies in the neurotransmitters ("chemical messengers") of the brain. When ADD is present, the message moves down the neuron but doesn't always cross to the next neuron. Three neurotransmitters are believed to be affected in the brain of persons with ADD/ADHD: dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin. When these neurotransmitters are inefficient, the result can be inattention, distractibility, aggression, depression and irritability. It is important to recognize that ADD and ADHD are caused by a neurological flaw in the brain chemistry and not by poor parenting. ADD can be inherited and, according to Russell Barkley, "approximately 40% of all youngsters with ADD have at least one parent who has this condition." (Zeigler Dendy, 1995).

Students with Attention Deficit Disorder, with or without Hyperactivity, exhibit some or all of the primary symptoms, namely:

- inattention
- distractibility
- impulsiveness
- hyperactivity

Thirty percent of teenagers with ADD which is left untreated end up with Oppositional Defiant Disorder. ODD is characterized by:

- short temper
- argumentativeness
- defiance of rules
- deliberately being annoying to others
- blaming others for mistakes
- being resentful

Twenty percent of teenagers with ADD which is left untreated end up with Conduct Disorder, characterized by:

- violence
- aggression to people or animals
- truancy, violation of school rules
- deceitfulness

(Zeigler Dendy, 1995 pp 47-50)

While the biological basis for ADD/ADHD has been proven,

> ... *many problems parents and teenagers face are the result of an interaction between biochemical, psychological and social factors. For example, a student who is impulsive as a result of ADD (biological cause) may act worse if his parents provide no rules or structure or are hostile, physically abusive or inconsistent in their discipline (psychological factors). The influence of his friends on his behavior will also have a major impact.* (Zeigler Dendy, 1995, p. 15).

It is useful to look at the three ecologies in a child's life in order to diagnose and treat the child with ADD/ADHD. Hammill and Bartel (1990) take a holistic approach to the pupil, looking at the **home**, **school** and **peers** as seen by the child, teacher and parent. In what they term a "sociogram", they observe the interaction and overlap among them, the conflict one poses upon the other, and the degree of success that the child with a learning disability experiences in each realm. In addition, if the child is having problems in one or more of these ecologies, parents and educators must ask what support services exist in each ecology that will help the ADD/HD child. What are the expectations for the child in each ecology? One may also ask whether the

disability is under control in each ecology, or whether the disability has taken control of the family, classroom or social setting (Kilcarr, 2001). The secondary symptoms will affect the child in all three settings, and will damage self-image and self-esteem.

Children suffering from ADD will have difficulties at school and at home in family situations and with their own peers. For example, when left undiagnosed and untreated, the child may seek support from negative influences such as drugs, alcohol and gangs. Children who have not been diagnosed and treated for ADD won't have the strength to extract themselves from identifying with a negative peer group. Furthermore, they may build a wall around themselves and be unable to communicate their needs and problems to their very concerned parents and teachers. (Zeigler Dendy, 1995).

Dr. Edward Hallowell in his book Driven to Distraction (1990) warns parents and teachers of what he calls the "ADD-oid" culture. Pseudo ADD is a metaphor for our fast-paced society and is characterized by the speed and splintering of our attention in order to "keep up". The claims on our attention, the explosion of information and communication technology, provide good examples of ADD behavior. Hallowell warns us not to suspect every inattentive, impulsive pupil of having ADD. People with ADD have these symptoms for a longer duration and with a greater intensity than others. Only through a team-directed approach that includes the school, family, peers and medical experts, can we diagnose and treat this disorder.

Diagnosis

ADD/ADHD is diagnosed by means of teachers' and parents' direct observation. Teachers are asked to fill out a questionnaire that asks about the child's behavior, skills and achievement in the classroom. Parents fill out a similar questionnaire relating to behavior, compliance, forgetfulness, organization and other clues that signal ADD (Sears & Thompson, 1998, pp.42,43). In addition, the child undergoes medical, neurological and cognitive examinations to rule out organic causes such as visual and hearing disorders, eating disorders and sleep disorders. (Shaarei Tzedek Medical Center, Neurological Dept, Pamphlet, 2001).

A relatively objective and accurate method currently being used to diagnose ADD is TOVA, a Visual Continuous Performance Test, which looks at variables of attention and impulsivity. The child watches a monitor and has to strike a key when a target appears on the screen. If the child hits the trigger over and over when there is no target, this is a sign of impulsivity. Failing to hit the trigger when there is a target shows inattentiveness. The test is 22 minutes long and measures reaction time and variability. (Shaarei Tzedek, Neurological Dept, TOVA Pamphlet, 2001)

Medication

Medication is considered the cornerstone of treatment (Hallowell, 1990) although behavior and learning strategies must also be incorporated into a comprehensive treatment plan. Only a doctor can prescribe medication; teachers may be held liable for making remarks such as "he should be on Ritalin."

The drugs used to treat ADD are called psychostimulants and include Ritalin, Dexedrine and Cylert. Medication will stimulate the release of chemicals in the brain, which will improve attention and reduce impulsivity and hyperactivity. (Zeigler Dendy,1995). Dr. Russell Barkley explains that increasing this stimulant in the brain helps to increase the activity of those brain cells most responsible for inhibiting behavior and helps sufferers to stick with what they are doing. (Sears, Thompson, 1998).

Ritalin is a narcotic which has been classified as a Schedule II drug; this means that prescriptions are carefully monitored. (Sears Thompson, 1998) In order to prevent possible abuse, only certain doctors are allowed to prescribe Ritalin in both Israel and the United States. Ritalin cannot be called into the pharmacy over the phone. But once the Ritalin leaves the pharmacy, control of the drug is in the hands of the parent and the child. In my experience as a teacher, the ADD/ADHD pupil will usually be under-medicated – they will forget to take the pill before school.

There is a 70-80 percent success rate in controlling ADD/ADHD with medication. (Zeigler Dendy,1995) When stimulants don't work, tricyclic antidepressants or adolescent psychiatry are prescribed. There are many myths about taking medication to control ADD/HD, such as the fear that taking medication for ADD leads to a greater likelihood of later drug addiction. (CHADD website, see Appendix 2). In fact, adolescents who are not treated for ADD have a higher school dropout rate, a higher rate of running away and ending up in shelters, and a higher rate of being adjudicated through juvenile courts for drug and other offences. (Antonoff, 1998).

Classroom accommodations

Success in the classroom is almost unachievable for pupils with ADD who do not get the proper support. Junior High and High School presents a dilemma for ADD pupils. More independence is expected from them, but the ADD pupil needs more support and help from his teachers. In the United States in 1991 ADD/ADHD was included in the Federal Law for the Handicapped which entitled such a student to special services. (Thompson and Sears, 1998)

What special services can we as teachers give? As a teacher it is important to establish realistic goals for the pupil and assess what skills the pupil has to reach these goals. Some of the things that classroom teachers can do for students with ADD are to try to take into account different aspects of the class setting:

- the physical environment
- the curriculum
- the scheduling of classes – is English after gym or before lunch?
- props and equipment used – motivating or frustrating?

Inattention can be dealt with by eliminating distractions in the room.

Teachers must help the pupils who are distracted by their own wondering thoughts or inability to listen. Pupils often have difficulty getting started and staying on task. ADD pupils ignore attention to details such as capital letters and punctuation. Teachers should not mistake their inattention for defiance. Some of the accommodations that will help pupils are to:

- seat them in a quiet area away from distractions.
- use cues and private signals to make eye contact when not on task.
- keep instructions brief and simple.
- give assignments one at a time.
- divide work into smaller segments.
- find activities which will allow for movement – clean board, get chalk, move to pair-work, hand out papers
- supervise transitions
- use color, pictures, posters

Impulsivity is seen in the pupil who has difficulty completing tasks. This is the pupil that moves from one task to the next, especially on tests. Other signs of impulsivity are:

- the inability to concentrate on reading
- difficulty getting started – talking, doodling
- talking back,
- forgetfulness

Many pupils with ADD will start tests without reading instructions and without checking their work when they finish. (Zeigler, Dandy 1995, Ch.10)

Recommendations for Teachers

In addition to the classroom accommodations cited above, teachers would do well to reflect on pupils who have difficulties. (Cowan, 1998, 37) "Reflection-in-action", says Schon, looks backward to immediate past experience, and forward to experiences which are imminent. This approach could be useful to a staff of teachers all faced with the same or similar learning disabled children in the classroom.

It is important to find opportunities for excellence for these pupils. Teachers must identify their pupils' learning styles and teach to strengths using a multi-sensory approach. What "intelligences" or "competencies" do the child posses? Teachers must find ways to adapt their lessons to meet these intelligences. Furthermore, alternative assessment has to be used for children who have difficulty producing written work, who have spatial, memory, auditory and visual processing problems.

In my experience as a teacher of ADD/ADHD students, I have found that prompting a pupil unobtrusively will bring them back on task. I also ignore misbehavior, refrain from lecturing and criticizing, and praise and reward any good behavior. I call on the pupil only when their hand is raised. It can also be useful to seat the child next to a good student who acts as a model. Close contact with the parent is essential, and a system of weekly reporting should be used where the pupil is on contract and will be rewarded for good behavior and achievement.

Teachers need to teach learning strategies in the class. Pupils benefit from knowing how to review for a test, how to highlight instructions and how to find key words. One of the most crucial things to teach is organized thinking. Teach the student to use three steps which must become automatic when he settles down to a task:

1. What is the job here (What am I supposed to do?)
2. How should I do this job? (What strategies will I use?)

3. How did I do? (What did I learn? How good was the result?)
   (Sears & Thompson, 1998)

ADD pupils are often reluctant to ask for help, and must be encouraged to do so.

Dr. Sydney Zentall, Professor of Special Education at Purdue University, says one third of students with ADD will also have language deficits: poor listening comprehension, poor verbal expression and poor reading comprehension. (Zeigler Dendy, 1995 p. 235). Auditory processing deficits may result in the pupils becoming confused by verbal instructions and having difficulty following them:

- They need to hear and select instructions.
- Teachers must write instructions on the board and get the pupil to repeat them.
- Teachers can use post-it notes as reminders.

ADD students may also have poor short-term memory. Teachers can help them improve memory by using:

- visual cues – flashcards for spelling and vocabulary
- audio tapes
- color to highlight information
- the spell-checker on computer work
- mnemonic devices (word associations)
- methods to visualize what pupils want to remember
- raps or chants to remember facts and figures
  (Sears and Thompson, 1998, ch. 7)

For behavioral problems, teachers should conference with their pupils to clarify rules and expectations. A contract with logical consequences can be helpful. Often an ADD pupil will act out and not be aware of the wrong behavior. Sears suggests a dialogue with the pupil called "Instant Replay": the teacher and child recall what has happened and at the point where the pupil misbehaved the teacher should intervene and explain alternative behaviors. The teacher encourages politeness and cooperation by having the pupil replay the scene, putting in the correct behavior and visualizing it. (Sears and Thompson,1998,199)

If students with ADD do not actively participate in learning they will quickly become bored and disruptive. One key way of becoming involved in the material is by learning to predict. Active learners stay engaged and take control by seeking information, generating questions, looking for answers and carrying out an active dialogue when reading. This metacognitive approach is useful for all students, but especially for those with learning disabilities. (Sears and Thompson, 1998, Ch. 7)

Pupils with ADD may respond differently to different teachers and teaching styles. Is your teaching style a trigger for frustration and inattention? A study entitled "Academic Trigger Antecedents" showed that 70% of teaching was frontal, and during this time 72% of pupils exhibited anti-social behavior. (Rowlider, 1998) Forty-two percent of the time, pupils were off-task. Even with medication, pupils did not improve when there was no motivation to do so. Because of poor teaching skills, ADD students acted out and weren't on task. Almost 10% of the negative behavior occurred because of frustration due to unclear instructions. (Rowlider, 1998). An important outcome of this study is the importance of trying to identify with the pupil the things that trigger inappropriate behavior. Then it becomes necessary to prepare the pupil for these situations by role-playing and offering alternatives. Pupils need to develop and use self-knowledge and positive self-talk; for example, they need to be taught to say, "I need to go slow, not get mad." (Barkley, 1998)

- Teacher and pupil should discuss current performance and adjust accommodations.
- Teachers should model a strategy and get the pupil to memorize the steps.
- Behavioral and academic goals should be reviewed and increased.

Conclusions

With the birth of each child in the family, the history of the previous child gives the parents certain expectations. When these expectations are not fulfilled, parents may feel disappointment which is reflected onto the child. (Plotnick, 1998). The child who has ADD or any learning disability needs a parent that is enlightened and willing to learn. Often the parent is confused and grieves over the revelation of a learning disability in the family. "Why do learning disabled children suffer socially?" asks Plotnick (1998). Because the child learns the social behavior in the family and when he learns that he is not good enough, he releases it onto the outer world. (Plotnick, 1998) In the family, the ADD child needs the best parenting possible.

We must expect the best possible teaching for the ADD pupil as well. When teachers are aware of the problem, they can make the learning experience a more positive one. When teachers are aware of basic interventions, strategies and accommodations, many of the student's

outbursts and behavioral problems can be avoided and learning enhanced. One ADD pupil in a classroom can have a negative or positive effect on the entire class, depending on the teacher.

Teachers who learn to implement classroom accommodations will, in fact, do themselves and their entire class a great service. When we accommodate the needs of one, we make our learning environment more pupil-friendly. The accommodation made for the ADD pupil may also benefit other pupils who lack study and learning skills. It is comparable to a municipality recognizing the needs of the handicapped for public access. The ramp that is installed for the wheel-chair bound will also benefit the girl on the bicycle, the father pushing a stroller and the elderly lady pulling a shopping cart. Classroom accommodations give all students in the class a "leg up". For the ADD student, accommodations are essential.

In summary, parents need to learn thoroughly about their child's disability and its management. Teachers must be willing and capable of running a classroom that can meet the needs of ADD/ADHD pupils. Parents and teachers together must walk a long road to learn to accommodate the ADD child, but in the long run it is well worth it because:

> *If you treat people as if they were what they ought to be, you help them become what they are capable of being.*
>
> – Goethe

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FROM THE CLASSROOM
ISRAEL'S RADIO DAYS: A WEBQUEST

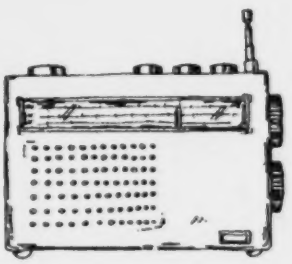
By Eduardo Lina

Some time ago, I decided to create a "Blue and White" WebQuest, adapting for local use Cynthia Matzat's excellent Radio Days: A WebQuest (http://www.thematzats.com/radio/index.html).
I spend a lot of time listening to the radio, so this WebQuest will enable me (and, hopefully, my pupils) to have some radio fun in English – provided there is some hard work, of course. No free meals!

Welcome to *Israel's Radio Days: A WebQuest*: (http://www.geocities.com/eduardolina3/index.html). Here you will find:

- An **Index** that provides the links to each of the stages of the WebQuest.
- An **Introduction** that sets the stage and provides some background information.
- A **Task** that is do-able and interesting.
- A description of the **Process**, which includes motivational elements around the basic structure by giving the learners a role to play, broken down into clearly described steps the learners should go through in accomplishing the task. There is also some guidance on how to organize the information acquired.
- A **Resources** page containing a set of information sources needed to complete the task.
- An **Evaluation** page that tells learners how their final product is to be graded.
- A **Conclusion** that brings closure to the quest, reminds the learners about what they have learned, and perhaps encourages them to extend the experience into other domains.
- An **Overview** containing pedagogical considerations and references to the New Curriculum.
- Some **Teaching Tips** for those teachers who might want to use this WebQuest.
- A **Credits and References** page.[1]

Are you still on this radio station? Oh, good. Thanks. You might ask, "But what's the point? More Internet, just because it's 'in'? Computer Lab work, headaches included for any number of reasons? Why a WebQuest and not some good old worksheets? Besides, why not use the original, if at all? Nu?"



All right, all right. Let me first explain, and then we'll get a word from our sponsors. I came across the term *WebQuest* for the first time when I was on sabbatical two years ago. I heard and read (as I got interested in the subject) that a WebQuest is an excellent tool to engage our pupils in using computers and the Internet in real learning. "A Web Quest is an inquiry-oriented activity in which most or all of the information used by learners is drawn from the Web. Web Quests are designed to use learners' time well, to focus on using information rather than looking for it, and to support learners' thinking at the levels of analysis, synthesis and evaluation."[2] The pupils work on the task assigned, often creating a presentation dealing with what they have learned ... It is quite clear that a WebQuest offers us a task type that easily conforms to the needs of the New Curriculum".[3]

The problem with most WebQuests, I know, is that they may not be useful in our EFL classrooms in Israel for a number of reasons: the material may not suit Israeli classes, there might be a problem with the level of English required, etc. Accordingly, although I like *Radio Days*, I decided against using it. The emphasis in Cynthia Matzat's work is on learning about and producing radio dramas in the United States, and her audience is made up of native English speakers. My audience is made up of Israeli EFL pupils, whom I expect to write and produce their own English-speaking radio program, learn and use English, activate their classmates (see Task, above), and, yes, have a good time doing it.

In the light of the controversy going on at the moment regarding having to access sites in English for the NBA projects, you might want to know how I went about the process of adapting and simplifying the original site. Allow me to tell you how I did it. I downloaded the original *Radio Days* and edited it with Word. This involved dividing it into separate Web Pages (one or more pages for each stage), deleting those parts that did

not suit the emphasis in my WebQuest (again, mainly learning and using English), adding checklists to guide pupils, and taking pains to use as clear and straightforward English as I could (always having my target audience in mind – Israeli pupils for whom English is a Foreign language). I then uploaded each page according to the requirements of the host site (Geocities.com).

I have already used another "blue and white" WebQuest, which I called *Free the Israeli Soldiers* (http://www.geocities.com/eduardolina2/index.html). The experience was well worth it: To mention but two positive outcomes: I had (and still have) the feeling that the identification we felt with the Israeli Missing in Action's families was enhanced, and my pupils did more than just learn English vocabulary and grammar.[4]

Are you still listening to this program? Great. You might also want to know that although a Web Quest by definition requires the use of the school's computer lab, teachers using *Israel's Radio Days* will not need to make extensive use of computers. Will your pupils complain? (Some complaining and bargaining is inevitable: when all is said and done, this is Israel!) Well, tell them the following: "After completing this WebQuest, you will hopefully have a better understanding of what it takes to create a radio program. You will also have learned some useful vocabulary, and practiced your written and spoken English. Finally, you will have gotten to know some of your classmates better as you worked with them in your team. I hope that you enjoy the activity. English is, after all, fun!"

I would be happy to work on other WebQuests created by teachers of English in Israel for Israeli pupils. ETNI allows us to share so much that it will be great to have such a "corner" there. Am I asking too much?And that brings us to the end of our broadcast. Thanks for joining me.

[1] Extracted (with some minor changes) from "Some Thoughts About Web Quests" by Bernie Dodge, San Diego State University. For more detailed information about Web Quests, check the following Web site: http://edweb.sdsu.edu/courses/edtec596/about_webquests.html

[2] "Some Thoughts About Web Quests" (see above)

[3] Jane Vermel, "Creating a Web Quest for the EFL Classroom", *ETAI Forum Spring 2000*, pp 29-31)

[4] There is a third "Blue and White" WebQuest (which I haven't used yet) called *Will Skateboarding Ever Be Popular In Israel?* in http://www.geocities.com/eduardolina1/index.html).

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SPRING CONFERENCES

Don't forget the upcoming spring conferences

April 7th, 8th

Academic Arab College for Education in Israel, Haifa

April 9th

Amit school, Kiriat Hahinuch , Tel Aviv

AN EFL TEACHER'S ABC

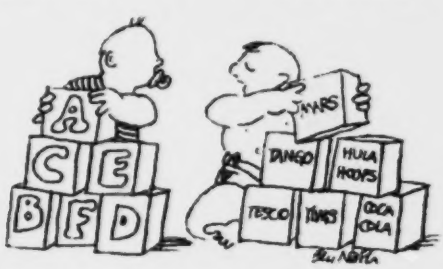
By Esther Lucas

Written in 1991

A's for the **A**nswers their memory has stored,
B is for **B**ooks we can hardly afford.
C's for "**C**ommunicate" sometimes still taught,
D's for **D**ictation, with errors it's fraught.
E's the **E**xams that we're all bound to set,
F is the **F**un that our students should get.
G stands for **G**rammar, they now have to pass,
H is our **H**eterogeneous class.
I stands for **I**ndirect speech and its laws,
J is for **J**oining a relative clause.
K is the **K**ey to the answers below,
L's for **L**inguistics we all ought to know.
M stands for **M**asculine, **M**odals and **M**ain,
N is for **N**euter, not much to explain.
O is the **O**rder of words they learn last,
P is for **P**lurals and **P**air-work and **P**ast.
Q's for the **Q**uizzes they have to expect,
R's for the **R**e-writes we need to correct.
S stands for **S**entences, **S**ubject and **S**ense,
T is the **T**errible **T**hing we call **T**ense.
U's the **U**ncountable nouns we supply,
V stands for **V**erbs and all they imply.
W's the **W**ay we would like them to speak,
X is the **X**tra hard work we don't seek.
Y are the **Y**ears, yes, we've given our best,
Z is for what we most need, which is **Z**est.

Written at the end of 2002

A's for the **A**nswers they have to retrieve,
B stands for **B**enchmarks we need to achieve.
C's for "**C**ommunicate", often still taught,
D's the **D**omains in which we get caught.
E's the **E**xams that we're still bound to set,
F is the **F**eedback we hope we will get.
G stands for **G**roup-work that can help them to pass,
H is our **H**eterogeneous class.
I stands for **I**nternet web sites and such,
J stands for **J**ournals, most like very much.
K is the **K**ey to what's "NBA",
L is **L**inguistics that showed us the way.
M stands for **M**odules we're trying to teach,
N, National Curriculum. Should be within reach.
O is the **O**rder we aim to obtain,
P's **P**rojects, **P**ortfolios. Are they the same?
Q's for the **Q**uestions we've come to expect,
R's **R**uman **R**ights that we need to respect.
S stands for **S**alary. We don't get enough,
T's for the **T**eachers. Some have to be to be tough.
U stands for UNICEF. Most know what it means,
V's for the **V**isuals that conjure up scenes.
W, **W**hole language our students can learn.
X is the **X**tra reward we should earn.
Y are the **Y**ears we have given away,
Z is the **Z**eal we will always display



"I'm doing joined-up writing already!"

CLASSROOM DEBATING

By Yaron Edan Nahari and Bronia Kabakovitch

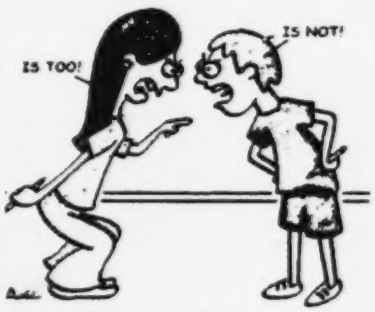
Now the serpent was craftier than all of the beasts of the field that the Lord God had made... And the serpent said to the woman... God knows that on the day you eat of the fruit then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food...

The Bible warns us against those crafty creatures that use their slick tongues to persuade. Not only the Bible. Great thinkers from Socrates to Marcuse have almost universally attacked those who make persuasion their business. No wonder, therefore, that lawyers, salesmen, politicians and Madison Avenue are so unpopular. However, persuasion and manipulation remain a terribly important fact of life. It is not good enough to complain that there are those who are trying to twist our arms or minds; we have to know how to spot and defend against such cajoling.

Furthermore, though this may sound sacrilegious, we also need to know how to persuade and to charm. After all, we live in a world of human beings. Most of the obstacles we must overcome are shaped, not by the laws of nature, but by the deeds of others. Most of our desires are fulfilled by interaction with others. Most of us place great stock in the opinions others hold of us. Almost universally, charismatic personalities find life easier; opportunities are easier to come by, others cooperate more readily and society in general is more forgiving. Our measure of success, therefore, is to a great extent a product of our communication and social skills.

All our lives, we are either the producers or consumers of rhetoric of one kind or another. It is unfortunate, but despite the great importance of rhetoric it receives zero attention in almost all schools. This, however, has begun to change, especially in the English classroom, where part of the English Bagrut is verbal proficiency. Debating is certainly one of the components of this skill.

So what is debate, and what exactly are its benefits? Debate is a formal, stylized type of discussion and argument. What debate allows us to do is concentrate on the persuasive aspects of argument while eliminating the negative aspects generally associated with arguing. In debate, it is ineffective to shout, threaten or otherwise negatively cajole the opposition. It is ineffective to get angry or upset and it is necessary to speak clearly, concisely and on topic. Formal debate takes many forms. Expert panels, parliamentary debates and boardroom discussions all share the fact that they are regulated, to some extent, by formalized rules and a chairperson. There are various forms of competitive debate that can be useful in a classroom environment. These forms of debate were mainly developed in Anglo-Saxon countries (another reason why debate has taken off mainly in English classes) as a sport in the early part of last century. In these debates, there are two or more teams each representing an opposing side in an argument. It is the duty of each team to convince the audience that their position is the correct one and to display to a panel of judges their argumentative and rhetoric prowess. Today most schools and universities in Anglo-Saxon countries and, indeed, around the world have a debate team. Most prominent figures in these countries, both in the business and political arenas, were, at one point or another, debaters. (This is also true of two of Israel's most successful speakers: Abba Evan z"l and Benjamin Netanyahu). In addition, every year debaters pit their skills against one another in the myriad international competitions held around the world. Israeli debaters, both on the high school and university level, have encountered a great deal of success in these competitions.



HOMESCHOOL DEBATE TEAM

There are three major benefits gained from the study of public speaking and debate. The first is that these classes produce an unusually steep learning curve in verbal proficiency in whatever language debate is studied. However, in the study of a foreign language, such as English, the rate of improvement is even more dramatic. It is difficult to say exactly why this is, but several reasons may be suggested. For one, by simply placing the emphasis on speaking, the language taught becomes alive. It becomes far more than something the pupil needs to receive a grade or to passively understand television shows. The pupil has to use English as a tool

for communication today. In addition to this, because the use of the language is very public, in front of the student's peers, there is far greater motivation to succeed. Furthermore, in public speaking, one receives almost immediate feedback as to one's performance. Finally, one can point to the fact that public speaking is a very emotionally-charged experience. Stage fright, possibly most people's greatest fear, becomes an English teacher's ally. Our memory and learning centers are strongly connected to the emotional centers of the brain. As a result, powerful emotional experiences form far more powerful memories. This is the reason you remember your first kiss more vividly than brushing your teeth last Monday. What this means is that lessons learnt under the influence of stage fright stick.

A second compelling benefit of public speaking and debate in the classroom environment is that pupils learn thinking skills important both in school and in life afterwards. Collectively, these skills may be described as enhancing analytical thinking. Pupils gain the ability to see both sides of an argument. This skill is developed because in debate one argues in favor of the team's position rather in favor of one's own opinion. As often happens, this means that one can find oneself debating in favor of a position with which one disagrees. Pupils also learn to organize their thoughts into cohesive points and effective arguments. This makes their thought clearer both to others and to themselves. Additionally, pupils hone their capability for quick thinking, as they are often called upon to speak at a moment's notice. One last benefit is that students develop their ability to analyze and critique the words of others. In today's world, where we find ourselves swamped with information and advertising, this is an essential tool. The quantities of information we are exposed to today are so immense that without an effective evaluation and filtering capacity we are to a great extent at the mercy of those who are our suppliers of information. On the other hand, we have the advantage of unrivaled easy access to multiple sources of information. For those who know how to take advantage of it, this advantage far more than compensates for our information saturation.

The third major advantage that the study of public speaking and persuasion delivers is a social one. The most obvious effect of the study of persuasion, on both a theoretical and practical level, is an increase in persuasive prowess. Some may shy away from what they see as manipulation, but the fact is that we all try to convince others of something everyday. It is an important facet of life and should not be ignored. Rather, pupils should deal with the ethical implications of persuasion and manipulation while studying its methods. Rhetoric is a tool, and like all tools its moral implications are decided by its use. It may be a source of either good or evil. Self-confidence is another thing that these classes manage to improve remarkably. Stage fright is such an elemental fear that overcoming it boosts ones self-confidence in general. The ability to speak succinctly and entertainingly in front of an audience, be it in the classroom, the boardroom or the living room, is an invaluable tool and can improve one's success, social status and feeling of well being. After all, we all wish to feel comfortable socially.

We ate of the fruit and our eyes were opened; we have learned that there is good and evil and we are faced with many dilemmas in distinguishing right from wrong. Dogmatic answers or blind acceptance of other people's judgment has proven, perhaps, the greatest evil of all. There is an urgent need for all of us to participate in serious debate about our world. There is an urgent need for civility in our conversations and mutual respect amongst rival ideas and persons. There is an urgent need for these things to begin in our schools for the sake of generations about to shape society. How convenient that public speaking and debate deliver all these things and carry so many other advantages as well.

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HAVE KNAPSACK, WILL TRAVEL: A COMPUTER-BASED PROJECT

By Judith Yoel

Have you ever watched a show on television and wondered how you could introduce it into your classroom? Have you ever picked up an attractive, colouful pamphlet and put it aside for future use at school? Have you played a game that you would somehow like to bring to your pupils, even though it may not be suitable as is, maybe not even originally in English? How often have you actually followed through on such intentions? We, as teachers, are constantly on alert for things that can be brought from "the real world" into the classroom. Often what we bring in is limited to a news item and a subsequent discussion. I want to encourage the introduction of authentic material, combined with material prepared for learners of English into the classroom. I refer specifically to the vast source of material available on the Internet. I have developed and implemented a computer-based project for high school pupils that focuses on the topic of travel.

Educators continually debate which is more advantageous: material prepared specifically for our learners or authentic material. Most everyone will agree that there must be a healthy combination of both. Nevertheless, use of the latter is probably not as widespread as teachers or pupils would like to see. A certain fear accompanies the use of authentic material, including that of Internet resources. Perhaps it is its reputation of being "too uncontrolled" and therefore "too difficult" to use. The content can be culturally biased. The vocabulary can be too hard. In the literature on language teaching, Kuo (1993) states that authentic texts are rarely appropriate and therefore must be carefully selected to suit the pupils. Without doubt, the introduction of such material involves time-consuming work that must be done in addition to the textbook, grammatical structures, mandatory tests and the like, which we as teachers are responsible for. It goes without saying that this structured project involves teacher preparation; the difference, though, lies not in additional preparation, but in changes in the type of preparation we are accustomed to. Rather than preparing work pages that encourage specific, anticipated answers, the teacher, in this travel-based project focuses on the overall concept, and divides it into a number of specific activities that guide the pupils. The skeletal framework of the project is good for hetrogeneous classes because it allows each pupil to work at an individual and personal level. Each pupil needs only complete as much as he is able, thus making such language learning feasible and success-oriented.

In using a computer-based project, the teacher is provided with an enormous bank of prepared material, readily available, accessible and often recently updated. The computer takes the pupils beyond the knowledge and experiences of a single teacher to additional and vast sources of information. Each pupil must actively request, search for and locate the information they need, making the project pupil-focused. Having some choice in the matter, pupils are very motivated. The computer also offers them the opportunity to practice skills learned in the classroom. Take scanning, for example: when finding a list of suitable Internet sites, the individual pupil must then scan the menu to see which sites are relevant and worth going into. This he does at his own pace and according to personal preference.

The computer skills introduced in a project like this are of value beyond words. In carrying out the various activities, pupils surf the net, master word processing, including typing and downloading pictures from the Internet; they also use email to communicate, use data bases to search for information on the Internet, etc. In short, they either become computer literate or improve their computer literacy. They are exposed to the conventions of different types of texts, advertisements, web pages and the like. In working with Internet sites specifically geared towards youngsters – such as *Ask Jeeves* and *Yahooligans* – they deal with "real English", according to their needs.

Gone are the days when only a privileged few traveled and people dressed up for flights. Today, travel from country to country is common and many of our pupils have been abroad, perhaps with their parents, on holiday, or to visit grandparents or relatives in another country. Even for those who have not been far from home, travel is something they look forward to, something they would like to do one day in the future. It is, therefore, a most suitable topic. The abundance of travel-related material available on the Internet confirms this. The ever-changing aspect of the Internet

encourages that the project be revised and added to continually. This project centers around ten activities, outlined below, which can be tackled as the teacher sees fit, either weekly, monthly, or in a one-time chunk.

Activity # 1

The aim of the first activity is to introduce the topic of travel and to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom. It also introduces the countries of the world, from which the pupils will later choose one to focus on. This is easily achieved through group work and games. Suggestions for games include: match the country to its flag, match the capital city to its country, look at a selection of postcards and guess which country they come from, listen to the music representative of different places and guess where it is from, place a number of countries on a blank map of the world, and match the words, "I love you", written in different languages and orthographies to the country of origin. You determine the level of the activity by the choices you make; for example, matching Paris with France and London to England is suited for lower level learners; matching Harare to Zimbabwe and Kabul to Afghanistan is suited to those at a higher level. The Internet can aid in the preparation of games. For example, matching a flag to its country can be found at www.queendon.com. Pupils may also work directly in this site. Challenge learners, give them an atlas to check their answers instead of or before you give them an answer sheet. At Dave's ESL Cafe, on the Internet, there are basic geography quizzes (Geography 1 and 2) for learners of English. Once pupils have been introduced to the vocabulary of travel, they can practice and further expand it through various Internet games utilizing travel vocabulary. At www.manythings.com, they can play Hangman or unscramble words. At www.eslpartyland.com, they can play Travel Trivia. Such games are also a good source of backup activities. Quizzes, such as the World Culture quizzes found at Dave's ESL Café, are a step above the basic geography quizzes and a good resource as the project progresses.

Activity # 2

The focus of the second activity is an inevitable aspect of travel, no matter where you seem to go – bureaucracy, more specifically, filling in forms. Pupils fill in quasi-authentic personal forms, structured like "a passport application". This may either be sent to the "applicant" via email or handed out on a page. Pupils fill in items not unlike those they would encounter on an authentic form: first name, last name, middle name, date of birth, place of birth, etc. The level of difficulty, once again, appears through the items chosen; for example, "surname" replaces "last name" at a higher level. This activity can be a good lesson in learning to follow instructions – "use only black or blue ink", and "print only". Encourage pupils to do what they would do in a real situation – go around and ask others to help them, once they have completed as much as they can – rather than turning to the teacher for the answer. It is best to first discuss the purpose of such applications, what they would expect to find on such a page, etc., so they are not overwhelmed, as many people are, when confronted with a page full of boxes to fill in.

Activity # 3

In the third activity, after a class discussion on trends in traveling and different types of travel (the organized tour, the adventure seeker, the tourist sites, rest and relaxation, and others), the pupils begin planning their own trip. They have to choose a country. They may choose a place they have already been to, a place where they have relatives, a place where they would like to go – anywhere. In the first step, making a decision, the Internet can be useful in helping them decide, whether it be looking at maps or photos of different countries. Once they have chosen, they must prepare a document outlining where they have chosen to go, why they have chosen to go there, and what type of vacation they would like to take. Upon completion of the first task, they receive a travel card, which once again reviews their ability to fill in forms. Here the questions are of a somewhat different nature, and they have to answer questions such as whether or not they have received the appropriate immunizations, whether they will be visiting a farm or they are coming from a farm, and whether or not they are bringing any food products into the country. A class discussion follows that elicits from the pupils interesting conversation about diseases transmitted through food and diseases that move from country to country, such as hoof and mouth disease.

After the decision-making process and expressing themselves in English, in written work and verbally, the pupils are ready for the next stage, which is to begin to look more closely at the country they have chosen.

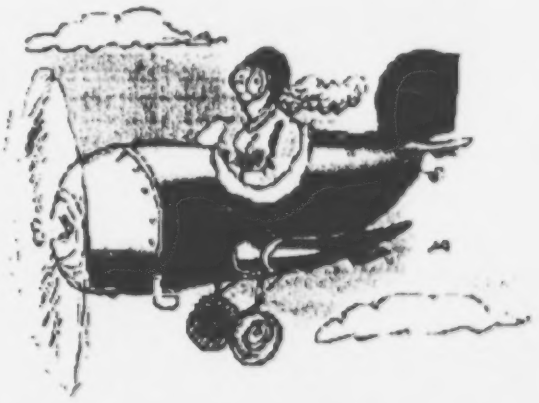
Activity # 4

The fourth activity encourages pupils to think and allows them to express themselves, by putting together a profile of their country. Sites such as *Dave's ESL Café* (country profiles), *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (www.britannica.com) and www.atlapedia.com are especially helpful. In the process, pupils learn how to do research, locate and compile information from a variety of sources, integrating it into their own work. Their work is not the standard list of: geographic location, population, major exports and imports, etc.; rather, this activity makes very specific requirements that (a) discourage the cut and paste computer skills so many of them have perfected to an art, and (b) relates their country to where they presently live. In their profile, for example, they are expected to describe the location of the country, not in terms of longitude and latitude, but where it is in relation to their home – is it north or south, east or west, of where they live? How many kilometers away is it? They also answer questions such as, "What currency is used in the country?" and "How much is your currency worth?" Students figure out the exchange rate in relation to local, familiar money. They describe – not illustrate – the flag of the country they have chosen, thus forcing them to express themselves in English.

It is helpful to introduce them to various Internet search engines before they undertake the task. They may want to use sites such as *Google* and *Dogpile*. Pupils will probably have their own favourites they can share with the class. Furthermore, it is important to review the basic strategy of searching. For example, the narrower the search is using the + symbol and main concepts in combination, the more focused their results will be and easier to wade through. Sites specifically aimed at youngsters, such as www.yahooligans.com, and www.directhit.com can be particularly useful. Chances are, the combination of searching, gathering information and writing a document is too much for a single lesson. Pupils should be encouraged to do as much as they are able; this may mean writing up all ten criteria for some pupils and for others, fewer.

Activity #5

After a class discussion about flying – their past experiences, airline food, a fear of flying, what determines a good flight and the relatively new trend of online tickets – pupils discuss what they need in order to book a ticket online. They need, among other things, a departure date, a date of return and a point of



departure. With a list of addresses, such as www.go4less.com, www.lastminutetravel.com and www.bestfares.com, and addresses and airlines of their own, they begin their search for a plane ticket to the country they have chosen. What the pupils have to present at the end is an outline of their flight plan, including fare and flight numbers. The plan itself is not lengthy or difficult; the work is in the process itself, during which pupils learn important skills, how to carry out an Internet search, to which countries they cannot fly directly from their home and to which countries they may and may not travel without a Visa or an additional foreign passport. At they same time, they practice a skill they may one day in the not-so-far future actually have the opportunity to do.

Activity # 6

In the sixth activity, pupils encounter email and electronic postcards. For those who do not have existing or accessible accounts, they must open up a free email account such as www.yahoo.com or www.hotmail.com. In doing so, once again they have to complete a form. Often such services are country specific, making this task easier. Upon accessing their account and receiving confirmation that it has been established, the next task is to send an electronic postcard from the country they have chosen to the teacher and/or to their classmates. A valid email address is a prerequisite to send an electronic postcard. There are an enormous number of postcards available on the Internet. *The Lonely Planet* site is a good source, as are these addresses: www.worldelectroniccards.com, www.localpics.com and www.1001.com/postcards/. This exercise permits the teacher to see, at a glance, who has managed to open the email and send a postcard. Having the pupils send mail to the teacher also allows the teacher to gather the

class' email addresses as a single distribution group, for further communication via email with the class or individually.

But all of this is done only after a class discussion of postcards: why people write them, what they have in common, what style of writing is used, whether or not they would prefer to receive a postcard snail mail or email, and similar topics.

Activity # 7

This task tackles the important skill of learning how to summarize, using the computer. As with the other activities, it is preceded by a discussion and in this case, the topic is cultural objects. Given a list of countries, the pupils have to come up with a list of objects typically associated with those countries. At a lower level, this may be carried out through a matching activity. For example, they have to relate/match wooden shoes, cheese and windmills to Holland and beavers, maple leaves and moose to Canada. What pupils do is choose one item representative of their country and write about it – an account of what the object is, where it came from, what it symbolizes, or where it originated. Once again, the Internet is their source of information. They have to look for data and print it out. Perhaps one of the most valuable lessons here is to teach pupils how to mark and print a selection from the text they need, and not the entire passage, which wastes time and paper. Armed with their texts, they bring them to class, where they learn to pick out the main point, to mark the important points, to paraphrase a text into their own words, and to summarize. Once completed, the original texts are put with the summary, as evidence of the pupil's success. This exercise can be controlled by varying the length and the level of the texts.

Activity # 8

The informal letter is the focus of this activity. Students learn what an informal letter looks like, compare it to a formal letter, and compose a letter on the computer. Some word processing programs have built-in help for letter formation. The content of their letter is their virtual travel in the country they have chosen. Pupils can experience a virtual trip through a site such as www.aitech.ac.jp, where they can go on a virtual tour of the White House, the Grand Canyon and even follow Bud, a mannequin who travels around the world. Next, they set about finding sites to see in their own country: tourist sights, museums to visit, and other people's photos and travel logs. At *Dave's ESL Cafe*, they can read the travel logs of other pupils. Once they have written their letters, they may also be posted by email to the teacher and other pupils.

Activity # 9

Here is where the pupil decides what to do; the next activity is left entirely up to the pupil to choose, provided it deals with English, the computer and the country they have chosen. A list of suggestions and ideas from the class makes it easier for each person to get started. Students could prepare a travel brochure, write a travel diary, make up a list of safety tips specific to their country, review a (virtual) trip taken from a newspaper, prepare a class bulletin board – the opportunities are endless. Pupils could present their projects to one another. At the teacher's discretion, other activities may be acceptable, such as bringing in a guest speaker from another country to tell the class, in English, about the place where they lived or grew up. Face-to-face contact is encouraged.

Activity # 10

In the final activity, pupils draw up a cover page for their project, on the computer, utilizing the different computer skills they have mastered, such as downloading graphics, changing fonts, and including their own photos. Once completed, they put together the previous nine activities into a portfolio. Gathering the material together gives the students a chance to see their success and derive satisfaction, not only from the final product, but from the process and the proof that they can now cope with data on the Internet, in English, and use it to produce work of their own. They should have the opportunity to reflect upon their work, self-evaluate it, either orally or in written form or a combination of both. The portfolio should be opened up for feedback, suggestions and recommendations from the teacher, through a meeting with the teacher.

Throughout the duration of the project, teachers may choose to supplement the ten activities presented above with additional work on the same topic. As previously mentioned, there is no shortage of it. Rice University publishes an online travel magazine for ESL learners, at www.rice.edu.projects/travels/htm, and over fifty

questions to encourage travel-related conversation can be located at www.aitech.ac.jp. Also at the same site are language exercises that work through the phrasal verbs associated with travel. At the *Tower of English* site (www.towerofenglish.com), pupils can work through a reading comprehension passage with questions that follow, called "A Fish out of Water", about culture shock. At www.esl-lab.com, there is a variety of listening comprehension exercises, such as at the airport, flight announcements and sightseeing. The nature of the Internet assures that more sites will be added to this list. Libraries and books shold not be ruled out as excellent sources of material, too.

The Internet can be a tremendous source of English, not to mention the significant computer skills that pupils acquire in the process. Pupils integrate skills, use a variety of sources and mirror real-life tasks. The Internet combines English for the second or foreign learner with the real world, the authentic English that our students so badly need exposure to. Furthermore, use of the Internet proves to pupils that they are quite capable of dealing with authentic language; they can locate what they need, understand it, and take it in their own direction, producing material of their own. In addition, pupils benefit from knowledge about another country and culture. The Internet, as used in this computer-based project on travel, is an immensely important educational source and tool – one we can hardly live without in today's technological world.

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ISRAEL COMMITTEE FOR UNICEF
EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT
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CONCERNS ABOUT PROJECTS

By Loubna Dakwar

The new Curriculum has presented teachers in both the Arab and Jewish sectors with many problems. I should like to focus on difficulties which Arab teachers, in particular, have been encountering. I am referring specifically to the "projects" which form a major component of the students' final assessment.

It is important to mention that English is considered a fourth language for most Arab students in Israel. Spoken Arabic is the first language acquired at home, and literary Arabic or Standard Arabic is a second language that students acquire in schools through formal instruction. Then comes Hebrew, which is actually a third language. Students who live in mixed areas have considerable exposure to Hebrew; however, for the many Arab students who don't live in mixed cities, Hebrew is a third language which needs to be taught as a foreign language.

English is considered to be a fourth language for many students. It's true that they are exposed to English by means of the media and access to computers, but this exposure cannot substitute for formal instruction in schools. Therefore, English is taught as a foreign language with different methods required for mastering the various skills or domains. Students do eventually reach bagrut levels, but considering the factors mentioned above, teachers usually need to use various methods to ensure optimal mastery of the language.

When teaching reading comprehension, for example, teachers introduce global techniques, but also feel the need to teach their students certain "enabling skills", such as grammar rules and vocabulary items, which will ultimately enable students to master the language accurately and fluently at both the recognition and production level. This point is very significant when we talk about projects.

While doing the projects, students are required to use authentic materials through the internet or through library work. This demands reading strategies and summarization skills. I believe that we as teachers can gradually help our students with these projects if we provide them with appropriate "enabling skills". I am referring to the following methods:

1. Teaching vocabulary: The students need to know the meaning of words, starting with the most common ones and ending with the least frequent words, especially when dealing with authentic materials found in the different resources relevant for the projects.
2. Teaching of grammar as a means to an end: Learning about grammar is an essential tool for acquiring knowledge regarding the various functions of language structures. Grammar helps students with reading comprehension tasks. Very often, students fail to understand a text as a result of not being able to recognize particular linguistic structures.
3. Teaching writing strategies is another technique which enables students to produce certain grammatical structures accurately in an integrative way while working on their projects.

In order for the students to be able to go through the various stages of the projects, they will normally need to master various enabling skills. Teaching vocabulary and grammar are means through which students acquire those skills.

In conclusion, all teachers share common concerns about implementing the new Curriculum, particularly the projects. I believe that we will be able to help our students overcome their difficulties by providing them with the right tools, which include the explicit and formal teaching of vocabulary, grammar and learning strategies. However, these tools should be dealt with as means to an end. Students should eventually be able to comprehend the authentic materials required for their projects and, hopefully, be able to produce accurate linguistic structures while in the process of drafting and writing up their projects.

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OVER THE BRIDGE

By Anastasia Gersten

Nowadays there is a lot of controversy over which approach is best for teaching foreign languages. I think that my generation is lucky to have the opportunity to compare previous experience with the present situation in education.

I was brought up in a family in Belarus where special focus was placed on education. At the age of seven I went to a school where English was studied in depth. This was not typical of that society. Most schools started teaching English in the 5th grade, as this was considered to be the best age for a child to explore a new foreign language.

Grammar Translation was the main approach used in the educational system. Most teachers were not aware of language appropriacy. What they taught us were isolated sentences, correct with respect to grammatical forms but not authentic or acceptable in real communicative occasions. I remember reading different texts about pioneers and the Communist party and translating them into Russian. The teacher would introduce the topic, for example about London, and we as students were supposed to learn it by heart. Most of us used the names of Trafalgar Square, the City, and Buckingham Palace without any idea of what they looked like.

There were no real situations, real roles and needs, or real reasons to communicate. I personally noticed that I was not able to use what I had studied once I was out of the classroom. For example, when I tried to express my thoughts, the only way to do this was to use the sentences we had learned regarding various topics, even if they did not correspond to the particular situation we were in. Our cognitive skills were not developed.

With the fall of the so-called Iron Curtain, the educational system gained access to information, new methodologies and approaches. In 1992, I enrolled in the first Experimental Linguistic College. It was there that I understood that I knew very little about English. Most teachers were participating in different exchange programmes, and we as their students were the explorers of the new approaches to teaching foreign languages with special attention being paid to the Communicative Approach.

Context-based teaching contributed a lot to my English. Our teachers asserted that language was communication and learning a language was learning to communicate. They outlined objectives and by the end of each lesson we were able to do something: to invite our friends to a party, to come up with a TV programme, to write a newspaper.

This was a crucial point in deciding about my career. I enrolled in the Minsk State Linguistic University, the best School of Education. Besides subjects such as Methodology of Modern Languages, Pedagogics and English proficiency, there were optional courses such as Technology in teaching English and Leadership training. I chose both of them because I considered that a modern teacher could not do without them.

We tried to analyze the pros and cons of different approaches to teaching foreign languages. When I graduated with an MA and started my career as a teacher in the American Studies Center at the European Humanities University, I was certain that a combination of a number of approaches was the best way.

In collaboration with Bryant College, USA, we organized a distance-learning project in cross-cultural studies. Together with our students, we were exposed to the library of the British Council and USIS. I also conducted a series of workshops in Afro-American Studies. My students took part in different debates, and they had to rewrite Martin Luther King's "I have a Dream" into their own culture. Grammar was introduced through different contextual situations, games and songs. I always tried to see my students as human beings and to teach them issues relevant to their world.

To upgrade teachers' academic abilities, teacher-training courses are necessary. Having started my teacher training course for New Immigrant Teachers at Beit Berl in Israel, I was immensely pleased to find out that the English Curriculum completely corresponds with my teaching beliefs. The course is really helping me to bridge my previous experience with a new career.

DON'T ASSUME

By Elana Cheshin

Don't assume that Jill or Jack
Who sit so quietly in back
Understand what's just been said
Or comprehend the passage read –

Don't assume that "sloppy" Bob
Purposely did a messy job
And crossed out, scribbled. tore his page
Lost his pencil, screamed with rage.

Don't assume that poor sweet Mabel
Just because she's earned the label
"DYSLEXIC"
Can't be taught to read a word
That's ridiculous, absurd!

Assume that every lad and lass
In a heterogeneous class
Has a learning style of their own
Now, teacher, don't you moan and groan!

Teaching is quite complicated.
Often it's been over-rated.
To reach all the different students
Demands sensitivity and prudence.

Take into consideration
What a wonderful sensation
When you realize that those labeled
"Learning different" or "disabled"
Could be geniuses in time –
Da Vinci, Edison, Einstein.

So be patient and aware;
Try teaching any way you dare!
The object's to reach everyone –
Only then your work is done!

DONT make an ASS of U and ME!

Dr Elana Cheshin – cheshin@netvision.net.il – teaches at Beit Berl College. She works as Academic Advisor of English at PISGA, Ramat Gan, and is employed by the Ministry of Education as national counselor via Agaf Shachar. She also works with MIFTAN schools. Elana has worked independently and on teams to design instructional materials (text books, workbooks, classroom management guidelines, software) which cater to heterogeneous classrooms and children with special needs.

POSITION: MOTHER, MOM, MAMA, MOMMY

JOB DESCRIPTION: Long term, team players needed, for challenging permanent work in an, often chaotic environment. Candidates must possess excellent communication and organizational skills and be willing to work variable hours, which will include evenings and weekends and frequent 24 hour shifts on call. Some overnight travel required, including trips to primitive camping sites on rainy weekends and endless sports tournaments in far away cities. Travel expenses not reimbursed. Extensive courier duties also required.

RESPONSIBILITIES: The rest of your life. Must be willing to be hated, at least temporarily, until someone needs $5. Must be willing to bite tongue repeatedly. Also, must possess the physical stamina of a pack mule and be able to go from zero to 60 mph in three seconds flat in case, this time, the screams from the backyard are not someone just crying wolf. Must be willing to face stimulating technical challenges, such as small gadget repair, mysteriously sluggish toilets and stuck zippers. Must screen phone calls, maintain calendars and coordinate production of multiple homework projects. Must have ability to plan and organize social gatherings for clients of all ages and mental outlooks. Must be willing to be indispensable one minute, an embarrassment the next. Must handle assembly and product safety testing of a half million cheap, plastic toys, and battery operated devices. Must always hope for the best but be prepared for the worst. Must assume final, complete accountability for the quality of the ..

POSSIBILITY FOR ADVANCEMENT AND PROMOTION: Virtually none. Your job is to remain in the same position for years, without complaining, constantly retraining and updating your skills, so that those in your charge can ultimately surpass you.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: None required, unfortunately. On-the-job training offered on a continually exhausting basis.

WAGES AND COMPENSATION: Get this! You pay them! Offering frequent raises and bonuses. A balloon payment is due when they turn 18 because of the assumption that college will help them become financially independent. When you die, you give them whatever is left. The oddest thing about this reverse-salary scheme is that you actually enjoy it and wish you could only do more.

BENEFITS: While no health or dental insurance, no pension, no tuition reimbursement, no paid holidays and no stock options are offered, this job supplies limitless opportunities for personal growth and free hugs for life if you play your cards right.

SHYLOCK'S REVENGE?

By Raphael Gefen

Pamela Peled's article "Shakespeare and Anti-Semitism" in *ETAI Forum* 14,1 (Winter 2002) turned my thoughts to the year 1972, when the English Syllabus Committee of the Ministry of Education decided to "drop" the Shakespeare play from the English *Bagrut* syllabus. This decision was an offshoot of the new Communicative syllabus, the aim of which was to teach English as a language of world communication. Henceforth, literary works to be taught were to be in current English (an exception being the optional poetry syllabus, where a Shakespeare sonnet was included as an option within the option). So "All My Sons", "Pygmalion" and "The Glass Menagerie" replaced "Julius Caesar" and "Macbeth".

I digress here for a moment to express my amusement that the new syllabus proclaims that it is introducing a communicative syllabus. In fact, the communicative syllabus of the early 1970s replaced an older one that stated as its goal "to impart enough English to appreciate the literature and culture" of the British and American peoples – and the literature programme of the *Bagrut* reflected this goal, obliging examinees to study a play and some sonnets by Shakespeare, essays and poems of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and some modern short stories (early twentieth century – some of which were retained in the new syllabus). Examinees had to answer questions on all four sections.

Dropping the Shakespeare play was wildly welcomed by Israel society, including many public figures who had been complaining for years that they "knew" about Shakespeare and could even quote bits here and there in English, but were unable to function in a communicative situation (except probably to quote Mark Anthony about Brutus). A minority of older English teachers objected, as did a number of school principals. These teachers maintained that ceasing to study Shakespeare in the English syllabus would lead to a moral decline among our youth, and indeed I heard this same complaint years later from some university colleagues who attributed the decline in moral standards in the country to dropping Shakespeare from the English *Bagrut* some twenty years before. Neither group seemed to realize that a play by Shakespeare, in Hebrew translation, was included as an integral part of the General Literature syllabus, along with Russian, French, etc. works – all in Hebrew translation. Perhaps the "moral standards" were somehow lost in translation.

A scandal-mongering journalist splashed the story in *Yediot Aharonot* and claimed that she had compared Shakespeare with Arthur Miller and found, surprise-surprise, that Shakespeare was the superior playwright and that the Ministry of Education and its English Inspectorate were cultural ignoramuses.

However, I was truly surprised when a well-wisher sent me a cutting from the English newspaper The Daily Mail headed "ISRAEL SNUBS SHAKESPEARE". I would mention here that this tabloid newspaper is not one that caters overmuch to educated readers (in the early 1930s it supported, for a time, the British Fascists led by Oswald Mosley). The item reads as follows:

> William Shakespeare has just received an educational rebuff from the State of Israel. The country's Education Ministry has just decided to eliminate the Bard from the syllabus of its high schools ... Israel's Inspector of English studies, Mr Rafael (sic) (They couldn't even get my name right – Raphael Gefen, is quite dogmatic: "We have immersed ourselves so much in the analysis of Shakespeare's works that we forgot that English is a living language"... But could it be that, on closer examination, Shakespeare is less than flattering in his portrayal of the Jew in his plays? In "The Merchant of Venice", for instance, Shylock is a grasping, revenge-obsessed usurper. Lord David Cecil, formerly Professor of English literature at Oxford, tells me [the reporter] that Shakespeare clearly objected to Jewry on religious grounds ... but Shylock's daughter married a Christian – so it was all right.

I am sure that David Cecil is being misquoted here, especially as the news item goes on to state that Shakespeare is being replaced by "the literary trio" of George Bernard Shaw (i.e. "Pygmalion" or "St. Joan"), Arthur Miller and Samuel Becket, and calls the choice of Becket ("an Irishman who writes his plays in French") "the most bizarre". As usual, *The Daily Mail* got it all wrong – the third playwright was Tennessee Williams ("The Glass Menagerie") and not Becket.

SHATTERING THE MYTHS

By Penny Ur

This is the first section of a two-part article, based on the presentation that Penny gave at the winter conference. The second part will appear in the next issue of the ETAI Forum. We invite readers' comments.

A myth is something that isn't in fact true, but which many people believe. Myths also often have a basis in a true phenomenon, and they are very seductive – convenient, reassuring, or with some kind of aesthetic attraction – which leads us to believe in them.

We need to examine the "practical theories" which underlie our teaching, and decide which ones are true – stand up under objective and conscientious examination – and which aren't. And, as I have stated elsewhere (Ur, 2001), nobody else can do this for us: it is the working professional's right – and duty – to decide what is true for him or her.

Often these myths are phrased as over-generalizations: "You should always … " or "Never … ". Sometimes, more dangerously, they are never actually articulated at all; they just come through as an underlying message, pervading professional literature or training sessions, but without being explicitly stated in a form which would enable them to be critically examined and assessed.

In this article, I'd like to look at a few such myths, state them frankly, and try to sort out truth from myth.

Myth # 1: Grammar should not be taught explicitly

This is one of the myths that has grown up around the new Curriculum – quite unjustifiably, really, because the Curriculum nowhere states that you shouldn't teach grammar. The goals, or standards, listed in the Curriculum are communicative "can-do's", but that doesn't mean that the best way to get to these goals is solely through communicative performance tasks. On the contrary, the research literature (e.g., Norris and Ortega, 2000; Long and Robinson, 1998; Spada, 1997) as well as the experience of many teachers, indicates that a communicative methodology is most effective when you take occasional "time out" for explicit teaching of grammar rules and focused practice. Though, of course, spending most of your time doing grammar rules and exercises is even worse than no grammar at all!

What's happening? Few teachers have, in fact, abandoned explicit grammar teaching. But because there is a vague, but strongly felt, pressure to do so, there are two dangers: 1) that teachers will totally reject the pressure and go back to over-teaching of grammar, or 2) teachers will overdo the communicative side, and their students will lose the valuable progress they could make through explicit grammar teaching.

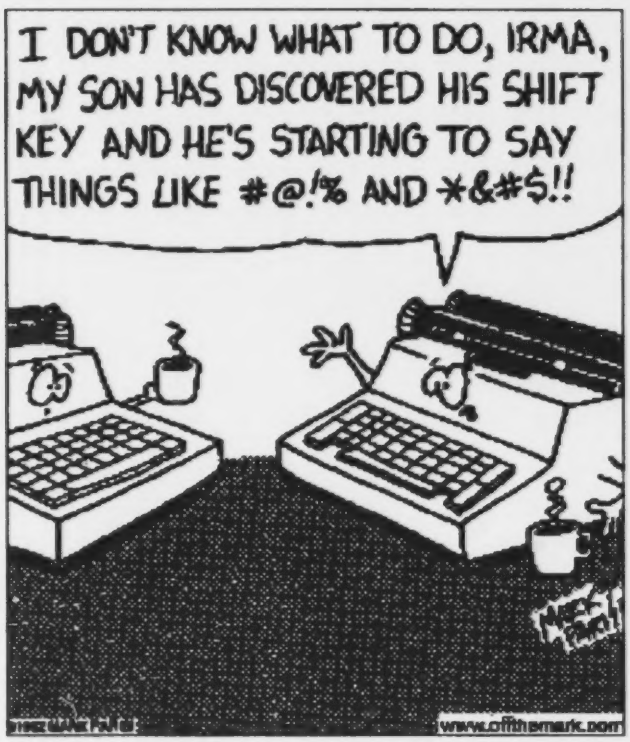
A sensible conclusion. I'd recommend spending between 15% – 25% of the time (in secondary school) on explicit grammar teaching, most of which would consist of meaningful practice. In elementary school, much less time should be spent focusing on grammar.

Myth # 2: Students should not be asked to learn lists of vocabulary

This is another victim of over-emphasis on the communicative approach. Our students cannot possibly acquire all the vocabulary they need by means of exposure or incidental learning through listening or reading. There has been research which shows that if students were expected to gather vocabulary only from extensive reading, and assuming they read about five pages of a novel every week, they'd need 23 years to get enough vocabulary to understand unsimplified texts satisfactorily! (Zahar et al., 2001) Other research has shown that focused vocabulary work – which includes deliberate strategies such as the use of vocabulary notebooks, learning by heart, making bilingual lists, looking things up in the dictionary – is essential as a back-up to extensive reading if students are to achieve the desired level of knowledge (Huckin and Coady, 1999).

As if this was not enough, *Encounter*, a serious international cultural magazine edited by Arthur Koestler (and, incidentally, later to be exposed as a CIA-sponsored weapon in the Cold War) took up this story in a short piece written by an Israeli journalist (why on earth didn't he go to Israeli sources?) who added his bit about it being evidence of moral decline and cultural backwardness in Israel.

Raphael Gefen was the Chief Inspector for English, from 1967 to 1992.



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What's happening? Teachers are feeling vaguely guilty about sending students home to learn lists of vocabulary, though some still do it (and not nearly enough, in my opinion!) Unlike grammar, many teachers are unaware of the crucial importance of getting students to master a large vocabulary – not only of single-word items, but also of "chunks" (see next item).

A sensible conclusion: We probably need to be doing at least some vocabulary work every lesson, and students should be encouraged – as a back-up to their study of oral and written texts – to make, study and memorize lists of essential items, which will be later reviewed and/or tested in the classroom.

Myth # 3: Students should not be asked to learn by heart and "parrot".

And again, the communicative approach has led in some cases to a myth that student utterances should be spontaneous, personal statements, not borrowed or based on a repetition of what someone else has said or told you to learn. But Guy Cook has made a persuasive case for the importance of "language play" in language learning (Cook, 2000): learning and playing with rhymes, jingles, entertaining dialogues and so on can be as valuable a contribution to learning a second language as it is to learning a first.

Moreover, as mentioned above, "chunks", or memorized multi-word sequences (clichés, idioms, collocations, common expressions, phrasal verbs etc.) are an important part of the knowledge of the competent language user, and teaching them should be an essential part of our courses (Wray, 1999; Nattinger and Decarrico, 1992). It is typical of classroom-taught foreign-language users that they speak correct and fluent but not idiomatic English: they say sentences which, although we cannot fault them by criteria of formal grammar, sound "unnatural". This is very often because the learner has only learnt single words and how to fit them into grammatical patterns: he/she has not been taught a vocabulary of chunks.

The only way you can learn sequences of more than one word is by learning them by heart; hence the importance of learning things like chants, dialogues, songs and rhymes.

The derogatory term "parroting" is used to imply that learning by heart is a mindless, anti-educational strategy. But it isn't. Learned-by-heart sequences are eventually a gold-mine of reliable, native-sounding chunks that the learners can use to enhance their own fluency. These sequences can also be used as a back-up to help learners apply grammatical rules. For example, if in the fourth grade pupils have learnt the chunk "I don't know", they can later fit this into their understanding of the use of don't/doesn't to negate the present simple.

What's happening? There isn't, in my opinion, enough emphasis on learning by heart, except for songs in the elementary school. We should be doing much more learning and performing of dialogues, chants, texts and poems, all the way up the school.

A sensible conclusion: Let's use more chants and dialogues in the elementary school, and encourage students to learn lines of text or dialogues by heart even in the secondary.

Myth # 4: Teachers should not tell; they should elicit

I don't know where this one came from. It's not so much because of communicative methodologies as because of the general trend in teaching/learning in the late 20th century which emphasized student-centredness, i.e., the importance of activating the student in logical thinking, discovering and creating rather than providing him/her with pre-digested information to learn.

In principle, I like this idea. The problem in our field is that language cannot be logically worked out, discovered or created: it's an arbitrary system. I know English; my students don't. So there's really no alternative to telling them.

There is, of course, an important place for activation: if students don't have an opportunity actively to "process" the information you give them, they aren't going to master it in any meaningful way. So I'll elicit and activate in order to give pupils practice, and to provide them with opportunities to try out and become more fluent in the language they've started to learn. Obviously, people learn better if they themselves are active participants in their learning.

What's happening? On the whole, I feel teachers are pretty sensible about this. Having said this, I've seen a few terrifying instances of teachers insisting on eliciting things from students which they, in fact, didn't know – with the result that the students became completely demoralized, and a lot of confusing and frankly wrong language was being produced. And, not so obviously, I have the feeling that a lot of teachers are feeling guilty about "talking too much" in class. Don't worry. Teacher talk (in English) is one of the most valuable sources of student learning. If you are spending most of class time talking yourself, that's OK – unless that talk is all in L1 (in which case, start worrying!)

A sensible conclusion: Probably a large proportion of the lesson should be based on teacher talk in English. It's great to tell pupils stories, tell them jokes, read texts aloud while they follow, ask and answer questions yourself, do a running commentary on what you're doing. There is still, obviously, a vital place for student activation, as I've said above; but the main source of learning is likely to remain your own input.

[Editors' Note: The second installment of this article will deal with the following myths: #5: "'Translation is to be avoided" #6: "Group work is a good thing to do"; and #7: "Younger learners learn languages better than older ones".]

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Reviewed by Batya Lederfein

Jewish "Love" Stories for Kids

Pitspopany Press, New York, 2002
ISBN: 0-930143-14-1; 0-930143-15-X.

This is a book of five stories for children, headed by a story by Leslie Cohen, a regular contributor to the *ETAI Forum* and whose poem, "Top Secret", we published last year. There are no romances here, no tales of broken hearts but, rather, five sets of characters ask what "love" means to them. In "The Purr-Fect Cat", by Leslie Cohen, a cat, Shunra, realizes that her "G-d-given purpose in life is helping her owner, Davey, grow into a kind and happy adult"; "Where's Ari?", by Devorah Grossman, tells how five siblings come to accept their three-year-old brother, Ari, who suffers from CP (cerebral palsy); "Like Ruth and Naomi", by Tovah Yavin, is the story of a relationship between a shy schoolgirl, Ahuva, and the blind lady whom she helps; "Noah's Choice", by Michele Litant, shows how the love between a boy and his grandfather influences the choices that Noah makes in life; and, finally, in "Group Labour", a whole family participates in the pregnancy pangs of the oldest sister, BB.

The stories are Jewish in so far as they are placed in Jewish settings with Jewish cultural props (festivals, celebrations, customs, the Hebrew language) and, especially, in that they deal with Jewish values: charity and family life. They are varied, suspenseful, lively and altogether appealing. I highly recommend the collection for NL children or the children of native-language parents.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

You are driving along on a wild, dark stormy night. You pass by a bus stop, and you see three people waiting for the bus:

1. An old lady who is about to die unless she gets to a hospital.
2. An old friend who once saved your life.
3. The perfect man(or)woman you have been dreaming about.

Which one would you choose, knowing that there could only be ONE passenger in your car. This is a moral/ethic dilemma that was once actually used as part of a job application in managerial problem solving.

You could pick up the old lady and get her to the hospital, hoping that they might be able to save her, or you could take the old friend because he/she once saved your life, and this would be the perfect chance to pay him or her back. However, you may never be able to find your perfect dream mate again.

The candidate who was hired (out of 200 applicants) had no trouble coming up with his answer. WHAT DID HE SAY?

"I would give the car keys to my old friend, and let him take the old lady to the hospital. I would then stay behind and wait for the bus with the woman of my dreams."

Sometimes, we gain more if we are able to think "out of the box".

FOR ALL ENGLISH TEACHERS:

A second grader came home from school and said to her mother,

"Mom, guess what? We learned how to make babies today."

The mother, more than a little surprised, tried to keep her cool.

"That's interesting," she said, "How do you make babies?"

"It's simple," replied the girl. "You just change 'y' to 'I' and add ies'."

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SPRING CONFERENCES

Don't forget the upcoming spring conferences

April 7th, 8th

Academic Arab College for Education in Israel, Haifa

April 9th

Amit school, Kiriat Hahinuch, Tel Aviv

Please submit all contributions either as an email Word attachment or on a diskette in Word (plus a printout). Note the document name and program type clearly on the diskette.

Please try to keep the language non-sexist, e.g., by using **they** instead of **he/she**.

References should be written out in APA style. You can find this in the "OWL Handouts" put out by Purdue University – **http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/**

If you have a photo of yourself, or any other attractive visual material, e.g., cartoons, we would be interested in receiving this.

At the end of the text, please include brief biodata about your professional life, including where you teach and any other significant information. Please include your email address.

Address your contributions to:

Batya Lederfein: 4/8 Hama'apilim St., Netanya, 42264
Tel: 09-8615724
Email: batya_1@macam.ac.il

Margaret Porat: 15a Rimon St., Kiriat Ganim, Raanana, 43570
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ETAI Forum

English Teachers' Association of Israel

The key word in this edition of the Forum seems to be "conferencing". Ruwaida tells us about participating in the IATEFL conference in the UK; Valerie and Shireen about the TESOL conference in the US; and Susan, our new Chairperson, invites us to the upcoming regional conference in Turkey. Reports on the successful spring ETAI conferences are also given by the convenors. Most of the articles, this time, are extensive write-ups of presentations given at these two ETAI spring conferences, including the plenary by Amos on "developing dispositions of reflectiveness."

You may have noticed that the word we used was not "conferences" but "conferencing". As we see in the article on "grammaring", we're talking about processes, not static events. We ourselves had a wonderful time "conferencing" at IATEFL in Brighton: we met lots of new people, saw the faces behind the famous names we had been reading about, attended really interesting lectures on new ways of thinking about language and language teaching. We also had a great time "ambassadoring" for Israel and ETAI: exchanging copies of the *Forum* for other newsletters (the article on grammaring is taken from a Slovenian newsletter) and giving out invitations for the 2004 conference. We've already had some feedback: Elana Cheshin has been asked for permission to reproduce the poem published in the last edition: have a look at her poem here (p.71) – we think it will strike a familiar chord.

We hope you enjoy reading the varied range of articles in this edition: from cognitive aspects of reading (Amos and Rachel) through songs (Laurie, Laura and Sigal) to personal stories (Susan and Nava, our immediate past chairperson).

Hope to see you soon at the Renaissance Hotel in July, and looking forward to conferencing internationally NEXT YEAR (2004) IN JERUSALEM!

Margaret and Batya

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- **Developing Dispositions of Reflectiveness**, by Amos Paran
- **The Heart That Lives On**, by Susan Baram
- **Teaching Cinema**, by Nina Golomb
- **Shattering the Myths (II)**, by Penny Ur
- **The Books for Israel Project**, by Jade Bar-Shalom

Vol. XIV No. 3 Summer, 2003

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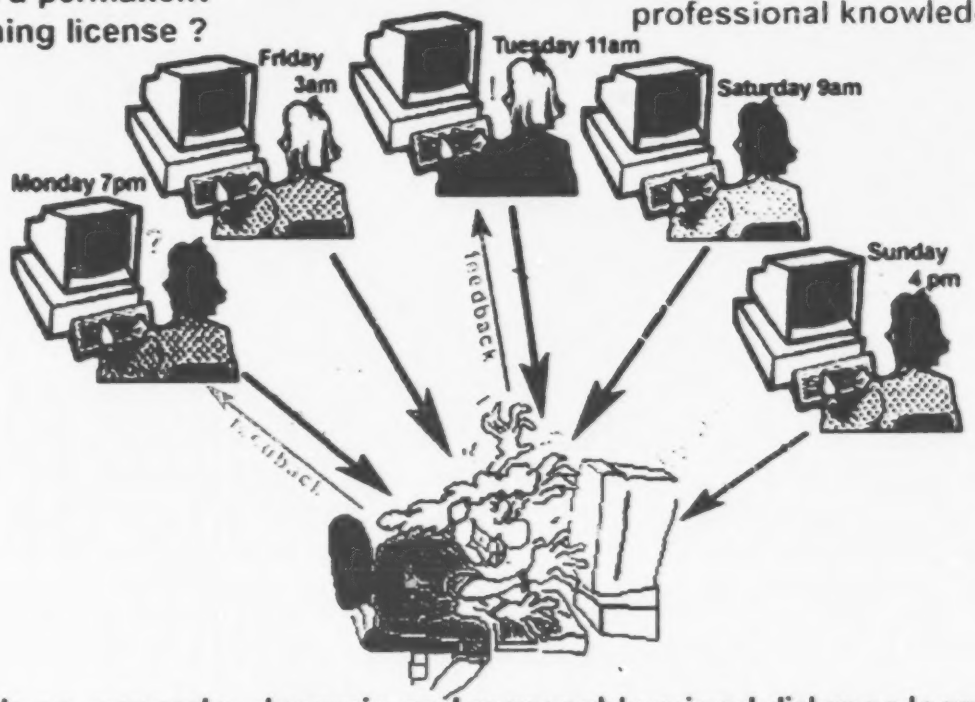

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Colleagues,

Like so many of you, I love to read. I read many kinds of books, but one of my favorite genres is "teacher stories." I browse used-books stores looking under the categories of psychology and education. Some of them are fiction but many are true stories. One of my finds from many years ago is *Teacher* by Sylvia Ashton-Warner*. It is a great story about teaching elementary school in New Zealand. Warner speaks about her methods of teaching, her problems with the authorities, her successes and failures, her thoughts and comments on her work, her life and her special pupils.

What does such a book say to me? Everything about her life and work could be considered completely different from mine. But she writes:

"If only I had the confidence of being a good teacher. But I am not even an appalling teacher. I don't even claim to be a teacher at all. I am just a nitwit let loose among children ... If only I kept workbooks and made schemes and taught like other teachers, I should have the confidence of numbers. It's the price of walking alone ... I've got to do what I believe. And I believe in all I do. It's this price one continually pays for stepping out of line ... But I must do what I believe in or nothing at all." (p. 198)

I am inspired by her innovations and sympathetic with her self doubts. I wonder how such a dedicated teacher, who is obviously doing such wonderful work, can feel like she does. The answer comes towards the end of her book:

"I've got so much to say that I'm going to stop trying to say it. This is the last lot of this diary ... Its purpose has already been fulfilled. I was lonely, professionally..." (p. 213)

And then I am thankful for ETAI, because I am never lonely professionally. That does not mean that a teachers' organization can or should take the place of reflection and diaries. However, we do have a forum for sharing and getting input and feedback that she didn't have. We can have the confidence of numbers when we present our ideas at a conference or write an article for the *ETAI Forum* or the *ETJ*. We don't have to walk alone.

Recent ETAI events have certainly demonstrated this. We have had amazing numbers attend our winter and spring events. I wish we had counted how many new presenters we had this year. There were many, and I feel that this is as important an achievement as the numbers of teachers and students that attended.

So, reflect on your teaching ... and then share your experiences with us at an ETAI conference. Become an ETAI presenter and/or an ETAI writer. You can inspire us. You can share your questions and problems with us. Join us and participate actively. You are not alone professionally.

Susan Holzman

* Ashton-Warner, S. (1963). *Teacher*. New York: Simon and Schuster

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MESSAGES FROM OUR SECRETARY, SHEILA BAUMAN

Make a note / Put it in your diary

SUMMER CONFERENCE 2003

Renaissance Hotel
Jerusalem

- Pre conference July 14th
- Conference - July 15-16th

International Conference

REACHING FOR GREATER HEIGHTS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Celebrate the Silver Jubilee of ETAI in Jerusalem, the City of Gold, at our next International Conference which will be held between

July 11-14, 2004

We would like to thank Nava Horovitz for agreeing to convene the conference.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all our members to please update the office if any of their information has been changed ... address, telephone, e-mail, etc.

Please keep in mind that you have three months in order to renew your membership, after which you will be dropped from our mailing list.

APOLOGY

Please note that the cost of the ACT Course was mistakenly published as NIS 550 and it should have been NIS 650.

We apologize for any inconvenience.

National Chairperson Susan Holzman
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A SPECIAL THANK YOU
TO
ERIC COHEN BOOKS
for laying out the *ETAI FORUM*
and to Eric for his constant help and support

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Course Tutor: Dr. Peggy Barzilay
Instructors: Dr. Peggy Barzilay, Dr. Susan Holtzman, Susie Russak

The program consists of three courses:
1. Psychology of Reading
2. Identification and Remediation of learning problems
3. Remedial Reading Instruction (Hickey Method)

Practice teaching is required during the second semester.

Courses for Reading Specialists

Mondays: 14:15-17:45 (6 weekly hours; Total: 196 hours)

Course Tutor: Dr. Peggy Barzilay
Course Instructors: Dr. Peggy Barzilay, Dr. Elana Cheshin, Susie Russak

This full year certificate builds upon and expands the foundation provided by a basic reading course. Emphasis is placed on
1. Advanced phonics and the teaching of comprehension
2. Practicum: formal and informal assessment tools and learning disabilities
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Practice teaching is required.

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Online: Second Semester (end of Feb. - middle of June) Total: 28 hours

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This **online** course will provide teachers with hands-on experience and knowledge in linking assessment to teaching and to Standards. Participants will engage in designing, creating and evaluating a variety of assessment methods and procedures (e.g. tests, projects, group assessment, self-assessment, etc.). The notion of formative Dynamic Assessment, which intervenes in learning and documents learners' on-going growth, will be introduced and demonstrated.

Teaching English to Young Learners

Wednesday: 8:30 – 12:15 (4 weekly hours; Total: 128 hours)
Course Tutor: Rivi Carmel

Practical aspects of theories and principles of EFL for the Young Learner as well as varied, hands-on up-to-date methodology such as songs and chants, TPR, use of authentic story books, oral/aural activites, environmental print, teaching strategies and techniques will be examined.

To register: Institute for Professional Development, Beit Berl College
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Questions??? Call or email the English Department

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JOINT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN TURKEY: 10-12 October 2003
MULTICULTURALISM IN ELT PRACTICES – UNITY AND DIVERSITY
TURKEY–*INGED* ROMANIA–*BETA* ISRAEL–*ETAI* GREECE–*TESOL*

I know there are a million reasons not to attend an international conference. There is money, for one. I don't have to detail the difficulties of our financial problems to any of you. We each have our personal financial pressures and priorities.

Then there are the dates: a weekend, the beginning of the holiday of Succoth. Holidays are family days and not times to go off alone for "professional development."

On the other hand, there are lots of reasons to attend this particular conference. First, there is money. The conference is in Turkey, which is much less expensive than a conference in England or the USA. Turkey is so close: no time difference, the shortest possible flight! No jet lag, no long exhausting flight, minimum hassle.

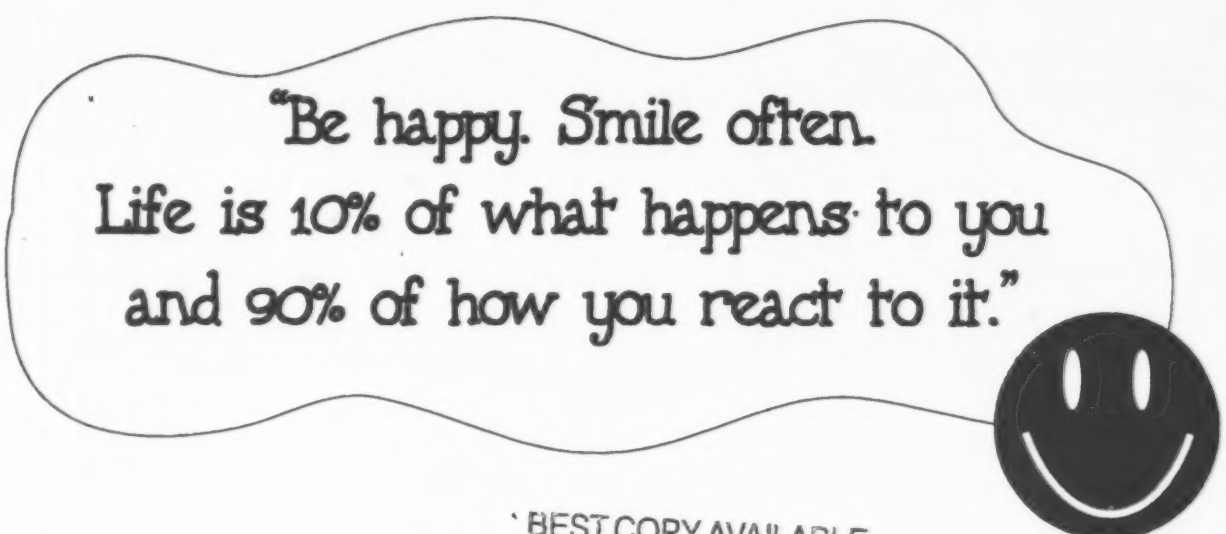
Then there are the dates. It is only a weekend, and for those who are not religious, it might be the perfect date to get away. Because it is Succoth, there is no problem about missing school because schools are on vacation anyway.

Then there is Turkey and our host organization, INGED. Turkey is a wonderful country with warm, caring people and interesting sights. INGED made last years' participants feel as if they were the most important guests. Our delegation last year was small, but we hope to have larger representation this year. Next year, the joint event will be part of our international conference (July 2004)

Are you tempted? I will be checking out possibilities for inexpensive travel. (Although I wasn't very successful in this area last year, I am still hoping that something can be worked out. I will post any information on ETNI). Write me (holzms@mail.biu.ac.il) for more information and check out the website: www.inged-elea.org.tr

If you don't have Internet access, Sheila, our secretary, has speaker proposal forms and registration forms in the office. Call her and she will send you a copy.

Susan Holzman



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BRITISH COUNCIL NETWORKING SCHEMES TO BENEFIT YOU

By Mike Solly

Have you heard of ELTeCS (English Language Teaching Contacts Scheme)? Do you work in ELT? Do you want to be more "plugged in" to regional and international English Teaching Networks? Do you have innovative ELT ideas involving networking internationally that may require some funding?

If so, read on …

ELTeCS was originally formed in 1990, partly as a response by the ELT group of the British Council to enquiries from people about providing "partners" to work on ELT ideas and projects. What would happen was that someone from, say, Bulgaria, would ask for advice about finding an expert in, say, Primary Education in ELT. At that time they often assumed that such an expert would be British. Here at the British Council we knew experts from all around the world…maybe from a third or neighbouring country, or even from the country itself. The person they really needed may not be from London or Manchester but from Tblisi or Tel Aviv!

ELTeCS was thus formed to put ELT professionals in touch with each other on a regional basis. Originally this was in Europe and Central Asia, but we now have six other ELTeCS regions: Latin America, East Asia, South Asia, China, India and Africa and the Middle East. Any ELT professional (University professor, teacher trainer, teacher, policy maker …) can join ELTeCS in any region.

What do you get?

▪ E-mail digest

You can join any of our seven regional email digests. Each online magazine has a regional editor who sends the digest to the email address of each subscriber. It goes out regularly (every few days) as postings are received. Any member can make a posting which is sent to the editor and would appear on the next digest. It may be about an item for discussion (recent discussion items on our European list included the pros and cons of using L1 in the classroom) or it may be informing or reporting an event or conference.

▪ Funding for project ideas

Twice a year ELTeCS has a bidding exercise for funds up to £2000 for ELT projects that involve participants from more than one country. Many projects from all over the world have started this way. Recent ones include a Materials Development workshop in Russia, a project to set up regional ICT networks in Hungary, a regional ELT conference in Sudan and a project on teaching maths and science through English in Malaysia.

▪ Publications

Members without email can also receive a hard copy of ELTeCS info. This is an annual publication that details ELT events and projects over the globe.

▪ How much does it cost?

Absolutely nothing!

▪ How do I join?

Simply go to our website: www.britishcouncil.org/english/eltecs/index.htm

Click on "join ELTeCS" and fill in the user friendly (we hope!) application form. We stress that you can join any region and in Israel you might, for example, wish to join our Africa and Middle East region, or Europe and Central Asia, stretching from Portugal to Turkey and beyond.

The website will also tell you about the criteria for bidding for funds and give examples of recent bids. Also, if you wish to receive a free copy of ELTeCS Info, please send an email to eltecs@britishcouncil.org

Hornby Schools

These are two to three week international schools for English Language teachers and other ELT professionals administered by the British Council and financed in part by the Hornby Education Trust. The schools offer a range of ELT-related subjects, from using ICT to promote intercultural understanding to teaching primary level students, from project management to language teaching and civic education. The schools are organised on a regional basis and are run and taught by ELT professionals from many different countries.

Coming up this year there are schools in:

Europe: Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Croatia and Romania

Far East: Vietnam

Central Asia: Kazakhstan

If you are interested in applying for one of these schools please go to:
http://elt.britcoun.org.pl/hornby2003/html/index.html for Europe

Brian Stott for Vietnam (brian.stott@britishcouncil.org.vn)

Jon Gore for Kazakhstan (jon.gore@kz.britishcouncil.org

ELTeCS looks forward to working with teachers from Israel. We hope that you subscribe to the email list, perhaps make postings on the list, and become an active member of this opportunity-giving scheme.

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The English Department : 02-6558194
View our Website: http://dye.macam.ac.il

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TOGETHER IN TEL AVIV

By Shaee Zucker

The Spring Conference in Tel Aviv was held at the Amit High School on Wednesday April 9th, 2003. The sunny weather matched the atmosphere of the conference and its over 500 participants. Among the participants were future teachers from five colleges, many of whom experienced their first ETAI conference.

Following warm greetings given by Dr. Tzvi Yarblum, Principal of Amit High School, Dr. Susan Holzman, ETAI Chair, and Dr. Judy Steiner, Chief Inspector for English Language Education, the workshop sessions began.

Nineteen ETAI members shared their knowledge and experience at lectures and workshops, while another sixteen sessions dealt with various commercial materials. Dr. Amos Paran, visiting from England, gave a session and ended the day with a plenary. Esther Fein, one of our overseas members from the United States, also joined us and gave a presentation.

Dr. Judy Steiner not only led us down 'the yellow brick road', but initiated a new and exciting element: her Chatshop was the highlight of many a participant's day.

Throughout the day we were able to browse in the materials exhibition and perhaps buy materials to help us in our classrooms.

The day ended with three lucky participants winning raffle prizes of complimentary registration to our Annual National Summer Conference at the Renaissance Hotel in Jerusalem.

"I've called the family together to announce that, because of inflation, I'm going to have to let two of you go."

NORTHERN SPRING ETAI CONFERENCE REPORT

Terry Benor, Yosef Daghash, Avi Tsur, Gail Mann, Omaima Kaldawy, Monica Rahvalschi, Liav Tal, Penny Ur

After the huge success of the northern ETAI conference in the winter of last year, we were convinced that this should become an annual event which would cater for the entire population in the area. Hence our theme 'TOGETHER'.

This year there was a problem of timing: the holidays of the different schools fell at different times! So the event was moved to the spring, and lengthened to two days.

Anyhow – yes, we did manage to have another huge success!

- about 700 participants on the first day, and 250 on the second
- a varied and exciting program (over 50 different sessions)
- a rich and inviting exhibition of materials
- a general feeling of enthusiasm, learning and enjoyment

The first day was, of course, very crowded, but people accepted the inevitably crowded sessions and delays with good humor – unfortunately, some people, in fact, were unable to attend the sessions they wanted.

An innovative addition to this conference was the 'chat shop': Dr Judy Steiner kindly made herself available for questions and discussion to all those participants who wished to talk to her.

So our hearfelt thanks to all the presenters – always the key to a good conference!

We should also particularly like to thank:

- the Arab Academic College for Education in Haifa for hosting us, and for providing the coffee and refreshments
- Eric Cohen for the lunches
- Richard Steinitz for pens and bags
- the second-year college students for acting as ushers

We hope that the success of these Northern conferences will encourage more and more teachers to become ETAI members.

Finally, a word about ourselves, the organizing committee. We have a team of committed (no pun intended) people who worked together smoothly and happily – and VERY hard! This year we were joined by some ACT graduates who we hope will be permanent team members. And, of course, the ETAI executive secretary, Sheila, who worked harder than anybody (thanks, Sheila!).

We look forward to planning next year's event.

But we have a problem: how can we make it even better … ?

Any suggestions? Let us know!

THANKS

TOGETHER

"TOGETHER"....what an appropriate Theme! ETAI'S "back-to- back" Spring Events were unparalleled successes, both in Haifa & Tel Aviv.

None of this could have been accomplished without an incredible team of Convenors:

In HAIFA – Terry Benor, Yosef Dagash, Omaima Kaldawy, Gail Mann, Monica Rahvalschi, Liav Tal, Avi Tsur, and Penny Ur

In TEL AVIV – Shae Zucker & her Committee, which included Ahuva Kellman, Susan Holzman and Nava Horovitz

Their commitment to excellence is only exceeded by their commitment to bringing the "best" of English Teaching to Israel.

- Thanks to Dr. Najeeb Nabwani and The Arab College for Education in Israel for extending their extremely warm hospitality to ETAI and the Conference participants for 2 days in Haifa.
- Thanks to Dr. Zvi Yarbloom and the staff at the Amit School in Tel Aviv for hosting the Tel Aviv Spring Conference.
- "Kudos" to Eric Cohen Books, Good Times, J.R. Books, Lexicon Children's Books, London Publishers' Agency and U.P.P. for their generous contributions to both Events
- Thanks to all those Presenters who shared their knowledge and experience ... and handouts!
- Thanks to Omaima's students for their vitality, enthusiasm and willingness to do "whatever" was asked and always with a smile. As future teachers, "you will do this profession proud"!
- Thanks to Yael, our lone usher in Tel Aviv, for juggling the varied "performance tasks"!
- ...and last but certainly not least A BIG THANK YOU to YOU, the PARTICIPANTS, the soul and spirit of ETAI Conferences!

Hello all,

I would like here once more to extend my warm thanks to the conveners and hosts of the Northern ETAI Spring Conference. It was my second consecutive year attending the conference at the Arab Academic College and it was again, wonderful! The hospitality, good will and organization is to be commended...not to mention the hard work of holding a 2-day event.

Presenting folk songs (and how to "teach" them) to such a multi-cultural audience was exciting and fulfilling. I was especially touched by the many young and enthusiastic students who came to the sessions and sang with me. This year I had my camera with me so I'll have some photos to look back at and enjoy together with the memories.

I'll be looking forward to next year's gathering!

Chag sameach to all!

Laurie

Have been busy cleaning, but took a break to express my thanks to ETAI for both conferences this week! Was very pleased to have attended both the Haifa and Tel Aviv ETAI conferences this week. Still get new ideas from speakers. Amos Paran's talk was especially fascinating because it pointed out things about reading that we need to be reminded of more often. Have been thinking about how to improve things in my own classroom since then! (Sponge in hand and all...)

Gail Shuster-Bouskila

I would just like to voice my appreciation of the most successful Spring ETAI Conference at the Amit School in the Tel Aviv. All the organizers including Sheila deserve warm thanks.

Esther Lucas

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IATEFL CONFERENCE – BRIGHTON, 2003

By Ruwaida Abu Rass

I was lucky this year to attend the 37th IATEFL Conference, which was held in Brighton, England, from April 22-26. First of all, I would like to thank the British Council Office in Tel Aviv for paying the air ticket, and Beit Berl College for supporting me financially to make this dream come true. It was really a great experience to meet many EFL teachers and teacher trainers who came from almost every spot in this world. I also had the honor to take part in the Associates' reception on April 21st.

My colleague from Beit Berl College, Dr. Susan Holzman, and I gave a presentation on teaching EFL through stories in the traditional Arab classrooms. Our joint presentation, given by a Jew and an Arab, drew the attention of many people who attended the conference.

Other colleagues from Israel who gave presentations at the conference included Margaret Porat, Batya Lederfein, Shosh Leshem and Valerie Whiteson. Penny Ur and Esther Lucas were among the other Israelis who attended.

The plenary sessions were very interesting, particularly David Crystal's "Shakespeare and ELT". The presentations were varied, covering all areas related to EFL methodology, teacher education and professional development. Classroom research and reflective practice represented the new trend for promoting professional development in the field of language teaching.

I particularly liked the presentations relating to the teaching of writing. One presentation focused on peer review as an effective strategy for revising and editing student texts, with special forms for practicing peer review being distributed. A second presentation discussed strategies for correction.

All in all, it was a wonderful experience. I hope many English teachers and teacher educators will have the chance to participate and present at future IATEFL conferences.

Ruwaida Abu Rass, Ph.D. – aburas@bgumail.bgu.ac.il – works at the Arab Institute at Beit Berl College and also teaches a methodology course at Ben Gurion University for students who have their B.A. degrees in English and are pursuing their teaching certificates. She also teaches a similar course at Kaye college and works with local teachers who are as yet not qualified English teachers.

SO WHAT'S A GOOD CONFERENCE? SO WHAT'S A GOOD FRIEND?

By Valerie S. Jakar (VSJ) with Shireen Bawab (SB)

When we got back to Israel following ten days of intensive *TESOLing, we were asked by colleagues, friends and family, "So how was the conference? Was it good?" Good? That is not how we would describe it! So how did we respond?

VSJ: I tried to find adjectives that fit the event, that could evoke what I felt about an experience that involved meetings with hundreds of colleagues, face-to-face encounters with experts whose articles I had read in journals or books, and discussions with teachers who, though living and working on the other side of the world, have the same concerns as we do here in Israel. What could I say, in one or two words, about the response to the presentations that I gave on behalf of the English teachers of Israel? And how could I characterize, again in the same word or two, the thrill of leading a group of experienced, competent, challenging individuals – the international affiliate representatives – in a forum focusing on the needs of TESOLers abroad (i.e., people teaching outside the U.S.A, where TESOL has its headquarters)?

While thinking about the kinds of answers that I gave, I have come to the conclusion that a 'good' conference is like a good/old friendship. Consider all those epithets we read about friends:

- *Always there for you when you need them*
- *Good listeners*
- *Tell you the truth, however painful, but put it in an acceptable way*
- *Give you encouragement*
- *Fun to be with*
- *Your relationship is dynamic, and refreshing*

Well, that is what the conference was for me. Delegates listened to each other, they shared information about their studies – which would be the latest "truth" there can be – and about their classroom experiences. Authors and curriculum organizers encouraged people to work with them on developing materials. Experts – like Spencer Kagan, Adrian Underhill, and our "own" Natalie Hess and Alice Lachman – were dynamic and refreshing. And just as with an old and firm friendship, when you renew your close acquaintance, it is as if you had never parted.

For Shireen it was an "eye-opener". She was new to TESOL, going as a first-time presenter and a U.S. scholarship recipient. She had only just struck up her "friendship" with TESOL. She was entertained by local Baltimoreans, she met with the U.S. award recipients from the many countries who were represented, and was prepared to exchange ideas with anyone she met, be they student teachers from Thailand or the past President of TESOL. Shireen, a graduate of the Ministry of Education's "Mentoring and Mentorship for English Teachers" course, presented a poster on an aspect of communication skills that are needed for efficient, supportive mentoring.

SB: I was among thirty-odd presenters who, each day, displayed their ideas, materials, theories and findings, in a visually concise and pleasing form. During the hour that I spent beside my poster stand, I received more than one hundred "visitors". I was asked SO many questions, and I had to smile in front of my poster numerous times (for photos to be taken!), but people were really appreciative, both of my poster and of the handout that I had prepared.

During the conference, I learned so much about teacher training and methodology, and in such a short time. I could have spent two days at the exhibition alone; it was enormous. I have brought back with me masses of materials – books, worksheets, software – to use with my classes and to share with my colleagues.

One highlight for me was the workshop-meeting I attended that was given by a group of writers and editors of textbooks. They were SO inspiring. They ended the meeting by encouraging us to begin writing materials for the international market. We 'humble' school teachers were very flattered, and the writers were sincere. So when summer comes I will get together with some new-found colleagues and we will begin to write!

VSJ: I gave workshops on Mentoring and Mentorship, and participated in two colloquia. One was on sociopolitical issues, focusing on the state of English as an International Language as it impacts on the maintenance of heritage, first and native languages. The other participants in that colloquium were Ulrich Bleisner (Germany), Joyce Klinger (Denmark), Christine Coombe (United Arab Emirates) Judit Heitzman (Hungary) and last, but by no means least, Barbara Seidlhofer (Austria). Each delegate spoke about his/her local situation with regard to the success language planners were having in maintaining the status of local languages against the "onslaught" of English and its cultural implications. The audience, composed entirely of teachers from Japan and Korea, were enthralled by what they heard and thanked everyone profusely for their informative, interesting and frank presentations.

The second colloquium was the "Teachers for Social Responsibility" Caucus presentation, given by members of the Caucus committee: Margo Aziz, the Chair, representing Egypt and the U.S. Government, Donna MacInnes (Japan) who teaches Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies to

College students, myself, and Elise Klein, Chair-elect, and founder of Teachers Against Prejudice (a U.S.-based organization), who showed how we can use film – of all genres – to teach about social responsibility. A large and enthusiastic audience welcomed the presentations on aspects of Peace Education for English Language Learners. I spoke about the many and various efforts that are being made by Israeli teachers of English to enlighten their students on issues of social welfare (e.g., UNICEF and UNESCO programs), responsibility and accountability, and mutual co-existence (e.g. SEED, MECA); to encourage them to engage in dialogue with students of other nations (Friends and Flags), and to search for the truth and think critically about information that they receive. I had a very warm response from the audience, as diverse a group as one would expect for a meeting such as this.

SO how was the conference? Well we all learned a lot more than we taught. We networked, we chatted, we displayed, argued, discussed, viewed, sang, played games…

But how WAS it?

Like a good friend – we can't wait to be with them again!

Shireen Bawab lives in Beit Hanina. She has been teaching English for eighteen years, although she originally qualified as a commerce teacher. Shireen teaches at the Freres Boys School, where she has taught English to grades one through seven. Recently, she was a teacher counselor with the Holistic Program (for teachers in East Jerusalem), run by the Institute for Research and Innovation at the Hebrew University.

Dr Valerie S. Jakar, an ETAI Board member, is a teacher educator, working at the David Yellin College, and in the city and environs of Jerusalem as a teacher counselor. She is the academic advisor for English at the Pedagogic Centers – 'Pisgah' – of Jerusalem and runs the "Mentoring and Mentorship Course" for EFL teachers. Valerie has convened/co-convened six ETAI summer conferences over the last seventeen years, including two international conferences, in 1986 and 1998.

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*TESOL is the international organization of "Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages". (ETAI-IsraTESOL is an affiliate member of TESOL). As well as organizing mammoth annual conventions, TESOL publishes a practical journal on teaching English as a Second or Foreign language, a newsletter, a quarterly scholarly journal, and textbooks and handbooks for practicing teachers.

Most recently it has introduced an online monthly information and news sheet which "explores" English teaching and English teachers around the world. Short articles about your teaching are welcomed. Send them to etai2000@hotmail.com with the heading "Contribution to TESOL Online".

In an effort to encourage people in less developed countries to become members of TESOL, a special deal was arranged in 2000 whereby members of affiliates (we were included) were able to obtain an annual membership of TESOL for just $22. A number of people (members of ETAI) in Israel took advantage of this special offer and we hope that they are happy with arrangement.

After this three year pilot, TESOL has now changed its policy. It now offers three free membership subscriptions for TESOL, 2003-4. Hear more at the Summer Conference about how one of you ETAI members (but not members of ETAI-IsraTESOL), may be the lucky recipient of one of those subscriptions.

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK? DEVELOPING DISPOSITIONS OF REFLECTIVESS IN THE ELT CLASSROOM[1]

By Amos Paran

Introduction

Within a general call for educational systems to take on the challenge of teaching young people to think, the consensus seems to be that schools are not succeeding in doing so (Burden, 1998). EFL/ESL is no exception: there is very little work done on higher order skills, critical thinking and critical reading in most classrooms. Such work that is being done in EFL/ESL consists of isolated cases of teachers producing their own materials or designing their own particular programmes. In this paper, I argue that critical thinking and critical reading are important skills which deserve to be at the heart of language learning. I shall look at exercise types which can be incorporated into coursebooks, focusing mainly on one aspect of critical thinking: developing dispositions of thoughtfulness and a tendency towards reflectiveness.

The need for developing critical thinking

I would like to take as a starting point the following text, taken from a volume entitled *Cognition, Curriculum and Literacy*:

> *Eastern languages have many words for the inner states of being, for describing transcendental forms, and for altered states of consciousness. We have few; even the drug culture has not helped us here. Freud, using words from the Greek – ego, superego, id, and libido – has not helped us to see our inner being, but merely given us terms to explain our outward behaviors. (Hedley & Hedley, 1990: 87-88)*

My experience has normally been that people tend to nod in agreement with this; it somehow appeals to them, it strikes a chord. Very few people begin to question this: very few people think of it in terms of the mistakes which are easy to spot: that *ego*, *superego*, *id* and *libido* are not Greek words. Even fewer people realise that Freud did not, in fact, use these Latin words. He wrote in German, and used the German words *Ich*, *Über-Ich*, and *Es* for these states. It was his translators into English who actually used the Latin (Bettelheim, 1983). There is also the reference to that ill-defined entity, 'Eastern languages.' So, we have an interesting short passage here which succeeds in making quite a number of major mistakes in its basic premise, in spite of its brevity.

Thus the first point I would like to make is that we get a great deal of information about the world from the written word, from print, and we are often trained to accept print. But the written word is often misleading; and if it is misleading, or indeed wrong, where a major publishing house is concerned, how much more so in all the other sources of our reading, or when so much of the reading that our students do is on the www, where there is no quality control (see also Kern, 2000). This may look trivial, but I think it has important educational consequences, in that it seems to me that it is our duty, as educators, to help our learners realise this about the written word.

The obvious question at this point is whether this is, in any way, the task of the English language teacher. My answer is the second premise of the paper: namely, that within a state educational system, an overall, holistic approach to teaching cannot be content with viewing the English classroom as a place for language acquisition alone. If we see ourselves as educators, we know that we have other responsibilities to our learners. I am hardly the first person to say this. Littlejohn and Windeatt (1989) quote Dewey (1938:48) as saying that 'perhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies is the notion that a person learns only the particular thing he is studying at the time.' More recently, Williams has complained that 'the problem with many traditional language-learning activities has been ... that they have lacked any real value to the learners of an extralinguistic nature.' (1998:86). An element of critical thinking in which learners are encouraged to question texts is an important way of adding this extralinguistic value to the classroom.

[1] This is a slightly revised version of Paran 2003 (in Phipps and Kurtoglu Eken, Eds.) and Paran (2003) (in Renandaya, Ed.)

Critical Thinking

There are various types of categorisation of critical thinking in the literature, a general distinction between lower and higher order thinking being fairly prevalent. Onosko and Newmann state that

> *Defined broadly, higher-order thinking is expanded use of the mind to meet new challenges; lower-order thinking represents routine, mechanistic application and limited use of the mind. Expanded use of the mind occurs when a person must interpret, analyze or manipulate information, because a question to be answered or a problem to be solved cannot be resolved through the routine application of previously-learned knowledge. In contrast, lower-order thinking generally involves repetitive operations such as listing information previously learned or memorized, using previously-learned formulae ... applying procedural rules ... and other routinized or algorithmic mental activities. (1994:28)*

They suggest that there are three components needed for higher-order thinking.

The first component is in-depth knowledge, which they unpack further into three types: substantive knowledge (knowledge of content), analytic knowledge (what constitutes a good argument; what is reliable evidence), and metacognitive knowledge (monitoring one's thought processes).

The second is intellectual skills which, they stress, are often domain specific.

The third element is attitudes and dispositions of thoughtfulness, which they define as

> *'a persistent desire that claims be supported by reasons (and that the reasons themselves be scrutinized); a tendency to be reflective – to take time to think problems through for oneself, rather than acting impulsively or automatically accepting the views of others; a curiosity to explore new questions; a flexibility to entertain alternative and original solutions to problems; and a habit of examining one's own thinking processes. ... Thoughtfulness thereby involves attitudes, personality or character traits, habits of mind, general values, and beliefs or epistemologies about the nature of knowledge.' (*Onosko and Newmann 1994: 30.*)*

Critical thinking in EFL

To what extent do EFL materials contribute to the development of critical thinking skills, as I have defined them above, or to any of their components? Although there are exceptions, normally there is very little that involves interpreting, analyzing or manipulating of information in EFL learning materials. Most operations that learners are called upon to do fall into the realm of routine operations, as described above; very often what learners are asked to do with information is extract it, and stop there. This becomes clear if we look specifically at dispositions of reflectiveness.

The main problem I see with most books is that there is very little there that would help the learners develop a critical disposition towards texts; learners are very rarely asked to comment on texts, react to them, or express a view about them. In cases where this does happen in coursebooks, the type of reflection that is suggested is along the lines of 'What do you think about the suggestions of the writer?' For example, a text about how to start running (Soars and Soars 2000:46) is followed by a number of activities, ending with the question, 'Do you think the author's suggestions on how to start running are sensible, or potentially dangerous?' This question is important: it encourages reactions to the text, and may signal to the students that it is permissible to disagree with the text. But it seems a bit like a free for all – any opinion will be allowed; there is no attempt to look at the text and think WHY one would disagree with it; for example, there is no information given on the basis of which one could disagree. For the purpose of encouraging critical skills, this is unsatisfactory.

An additional point is that in most cases this type of question comes at the very end of the reading cycle, as the very last activity – as indeed it does in the example discussed above. Thinking realistically, something that appears at the very end is most likely to disappear once it is used in the classroom, or, at the very best, have only a few minutes allocated to it. This activity is thus unstructured, optional, and appears as the last activity suggested; it is not very likely to be carried out; and if it is, its lack of structure will not really encourage reflectiveness.

What then, are the implications of what I have been saying? I would like to explore specific activities designed to help learners to question texts.

Activities for developing critical thinking

Below, I discuss a number of activity types which would fulfil the demand of developing aspects of critical thinking.

(a) Distinguishing fact from opinion

An important point that students need to be made aware of is the way in which writers may present opinions in ways which make them look like verifiable facts. A specific activity for this appears in Paran (1993), using an article published in the United States about the educational system in Israel. The article was full of factual mistakes, and the sequence of activities devised for it was designed to alert the students to this. The first step was to presented the students with a definition of the differences between fact and opinion. The rubric read:

> *It is often difficult to distinguish between fact and opinion. Here are hints to help you.*
>
> - *Facts refer to information that relies on objective evidence from other sources.*
> - *Opinions cannot be proved.*
> - *Be careful of words that have relative meanings – for example, what is "good" for one person might be considered "average' for another.*

Students were then presented with a list of statements drawn up from the article they were about to read, and asked to decide whether they were facts or opinions. Examples of the sentences are 'The school system is highly competitive' (an opinion expressed as a fact) and 'Students choose a major subject by the end of tenth grade' (fact). They then went on to read the article.

This can also be done at a lower level. After a short discussion (possibly in L1) about the differences between facts and opinions, teachers could present sentences from the text they are reading with their learners and ask them whether they are fact or opinion. This can be done at many levels, and with most texts. For example, the following are two sentences taken from Mohamed and Acklam (1992:103):

> *Shona sculpture is among the finest in the world.*
>
> *Zimbabwe became independent in 1979 and changed its name from Rhodesia.*

Although it may not always be possible to find this type of distinction in one text, especially at lower levels where texts are likely to be short, teachers can also go back to texts from previous units and construct an exercise on fact and opinion using sentences from them. Such recycling thus serves two purposes: cognitive and linguistic.

(b) Distinguishing supported opinions from unsupported opinions

Going on from this, one could develop activities to help learners understand what is a verifiable fact and what is not, and to understand the nature of evidence. For example, the statement about Shona sculpture is an opinion, but it could be backed up by other opinions about it, or by facts – for example, by providing stories about people who collect it.

(c) Texts containing factual mistakes

An important exercise type is presenting learners with texts containing wrong information which can be easily spotted. In the example regarding the education system in Israel, the post-reading activity asked students to see how many times they disagreed with the article.

A variation on this is to present learners with a text containing factual errors and to ask them to check it. For example, the following sentence appears in an EFL coursebooks:

> *In Britain, 5th November commemorates the day that Guy Fawkes was executed in 1605 for trying to blow up the Houses of Parliament and kill James I of England.*

This is, however, factually incorrect, and a task for learners might be to ask them to find what the mistake is, in a way that is appropriate for their ability levels. Some students could look up the information in L1 sources; others could access L2 sources provided by the teacher (try looking at www.worldbook.com/fun/holidays/html/fawkes.htm for a source which learners at this level could use to find the mistake); more advanced learners could be asked to locate sources on their own (just as I located the above website by typing 'Guy Fawkes' in a search engine). Thus for all groups, part of the value added to the lesson is learning reference skills, either in L1 or in L2.

One clear question that could arise at this point is how learners would be able to decide which version is correct – the one in the book or the one on the web. This could then become an interesting exercise in deciding on the reliability of sources.

(d) Texts with conflicting information

In general, I believe in working on two or three texts which discuss the same event or the same person from different angles or which include conflicting information. This contrasts with the usual EFL jigsaw activity, where learners read about different people or different cultural events and are asked to compare them. I believe that by reading different texts about the same topic, learners are more likely to remember information that they have learnt, as well as hone their thinking skills. What they are doing is that they are reading and synthesising or assembling information, for which higher-order skills are required (see above). One way of doing this is to have articles with internal conflict or internal contradictions. Another variation on this is using two different texts which include conflicting information about an event or a story. For example, Paran (1991) includes two newspaper articles describing a crash landing, with some conflicting information.

(e) Providing a reason

A crucial part of argumentation is providing reasons for one's view or attitude. Very often, learners are asked to provide reasons, but unfortunately this normally appears in the teacher's book, in the form of 'encourage them to justify their answers'. I believe such requests should appear very prominently in the student's book. A better instruction would be to ask learners to give two (or three) reasons justifying their answer, since this prevents them from providing general, non-committal reasons.

Activities for developing dispositions of thoughtfulness

It could be argued that any activity for developing critical thinking has in it, implicitly, the development of attitudes and dispositions of thoughtfulness. The two activities below, however, are designed to specifically develop a reflective and thoughtful attitude.

(a) Reflecting on content

I have mentioned above that content has suffered to a great extent in ELT books, and much has been written about the extent to which coursebooks in ELT encourage a consumerist view of society (see Gray, 2000). Overt criticism of this is likely to fall on deaf ears, but it is possible to construct activities to encourage reflection on these issues. At a recent conference, I presented a dialogue taken from Soars and Soars, (2000:89) between a shop assistant and a customer buying a shirt. I asked the workshop participants to write a short poem or a story, in 50 words, using words of one syllable only, describing the thoughts of the shop assistant. Below are three of the versions produced:

There's one. He looks like a hen that needs some wheat. Should I say that correct shop phrase, "Can I help you?" Yes, I should. That's my job. But, my wife... No, she can wait some more.

Tuncer Can, Istanbul University.

This guy comes in.
Wants a blue shirt
Not this blue, that blue
Not this size, that size.
Try this, try that.
Good!
Takes the white shirt.
Pays. Done!
Tea Break.

Jane Mair (BUSEL)

Come on in...
A new bird in the cage!
Hmmm. I can get him.
He looks naïve. I've got you...
This one? That one? All ok?
He'll spend a lot and I'll get a pay rise
and marry soon...

Sevgi Sirank (Fmv. Özel Isik Lisesi Istanbul)

What is fascinating about these three versions is how they all subvert the situation, express dissatisfaction with the status quo, and expose the consumerism and materialism behind the transaction portrayed. This type of exercise can thus stimulate critical thinking about issues using the uncritical material that is found in the vast majority of ELT texts.

(b) Reacting to content

My final example is what seems to me the most important approach of all – ensuring that students react to every text that they read, and that reacting is an integral part of the tasks set for each text. When one reads something out of the classroom, one always reacts to it: indeed, that is the first thing one does when reading anything. However, not only the inner reaction, but also discussing it and talking about the text with others are important (see Kern, 2000). This aspect of reading needs to be brought into the classroom as well.

Paran (1991) therefore includes a section in each unit entitled 'Reacting to What You Read' which comes immediately after the text. Eckstut and Lubelska (1989) have a section entitled 'What Do You Think?'. The fact that there is a specially-named section for this indicates, in both cases, that the reaction of the learner is not an incidental outcome, but should take centre stage. Sinclair (1995) manages to do this by structuring the actual activities around the learner reaction. For example, one text has a very short pre-reading task: 'Look at the photo. What nationality do you think Bernard is?' The learners are then asked to read the text with the following instruction: 'Read about Bernard's life. Is it an interesting life? Why?' Thus the initial reading task is inextricably related to a reaction. After two short vocabulary activities, learners are sent back to the text, with the following task: 'Work with a partner. What do you think were the three most interesting things or events in Bernard's life? Why?' Thus both the initial reading task and the task for a more detailed reading are structured around the reaction.

Conclusion

The approach that I have suggested in this paper views text as fulfilling functions besides literal reading comprehension. One of the problems with this, of course, is that such an approach can be unsettling for teachers and for materials writers alike. It is unsettling to the teacher because it brings in the learner as a generator of text and ideas and it is therefore divergent rather than convergent. It is unsettling to the materials writer because it takes away control from the writer, and hands it over not only to the teacher but also to the learner. Yet this handing over of control is vital within an educational system that would like to help learners become thinking individuals within a democratic society.

Within the teacher training world there is a strong debate about the virtues of training vs. education. With ELT, one increasingly hears of 'trainers' rather than 'teachers'. I believe that the activities I have outlined here are one way in which teachers can remain in education, rather than in training.

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TO ALL ORANIM GRADUATES AND FORMER TEACHERS OR STUDENTS

The Department of English Language and Literature at Oranim
is pleased to invite you to its third annual
Graduate Conference and Reunion
which will take place at Oranim on
Tuesday 8th July 2003
in the
Auditorium, Hadomi Building (Building 46) 4th Floor

The theme of the day will be "Literature – High and Low" and there will be a variety of short lectures, presentations, panels and activities – and, of course, ample opportunity to mingle and meet old friends!

You are cordially invited to come and please bring a classmate (or two…)

We look forward to seeing you.

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WHAT'S NEW ABOUT QUESTIONS?

By Rachel Segev-Miller

Introduction

A survey carried out several years ago (Segev-Miller, 1994) indicated that primary, middle, and secondary school English teachers in Israel used or taught between five and seven reading comprehension strategies: skimming, scanning, predicting, guessing meaning of words from context, inferring, clarifying grammatical cohesion, and mobilizing prior knowledge. However, a similar survey carried out recently in the States (Barry, 2002) indicated that middle and secondary teachers of English as a first language reported 13 such strategies, and teachers of foreign languages (as is the case of English in Israel) – 15; that is, twice or three times as many as the Israeli teachers.

The 1994 survey also indicated that teachers were not consistent with regard to how they defined a strategy (more commonly referred to by them as a "technique" or "skill"), whereas the relevant literature distinguishes between strategies – "plans for solving problems encountered in constructing meaning" (Duffy, 1993) which are deliberately selected – and skills, which are executed automatically (McNamara et al., 1996; Stahl & Hayes, 1997).

These findings are in line with the little emphasis put in teacher education colleges on reading comprehension instruction in English. Teachers in the 1994 survey complained that "In college I had only one course on reading comprehension, and no course on reading comprehension instruction"; "I remember we talked a little about reading in our 3rd year methodology course"; "I feel I need more instruction in how to teach my students to read", etc.

Fielding and Pearson (1994:5-6) pointed out the following: "Research showed over and over that comprehension can in fact be taught (...), that comprehension strategy instruction was found to be most effective for students who began the study as poor comprehenders, probably because they are less likely to invent effective strategies on their own."

However, teachers must be prepared to "fully understand an intervention if they are to implement it successfully" (Anderson & Riot, 1993:133). Reading comprehension at school has traditionally focused on the product rather than on the process. Students are given tests on their comprehension of a text – usually in the form of questions – to assess their level of comprehension. "But knowing what a student has comprehended does not, of itself, account for how he has or has not comprehended, and cannot provide information on how the student might be helped to comprehend at a higher level" (Alderson & Urquhart, 1984:xiv).

Questions

None of the lists of strategies provided by the teachers in the 1994 survey included the strategy of questioning, which has been defined as a meta-cognitive strategy (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986) and has been found to be related to other meta-cognitive strategies, such as self-regulating and self-assessing, which are crucial for successful and independent learning to take place (Segev-Miller, in press).

Research on questions in the 80's focused on question types (e.g., multiple choice items vs. extended response). As of the early 90's, research has focused on the cognitive mechanisms underlying the asking and answering of questions during comprehension and problem solving (e.g., Graesser, 1993). It has also focused on the cognitive demands of reading comprehension questions, particularly in classrooms (e.g., Brown, 1991; Elmore et al., 1996) and in textbooks (e.g., Ambruster & Ostertag, 1993; Rawadieh, 1998; DeKonty et al., 2002). These studies have indicated that reading comprehension questions were mostly literal, corresponding to Bloom's (1956) lower-order categories of cognitive skills (i.e., "knowledge and "comprehension").

These findings are not in line with current educational theories, particularly constructivist theories of learning, which postulate that significant learning involves "knowledge-transforming" rather than "knowledge-telling" (Bereiter & Scradamalia, 1987) (i.e., reproducing the information in the text, as is the case of literal questions). Significant learning, then, requires "going beyond the information given" (Bruner, 1960) and "deep understanding" (Perkins, 1993:4-5).

The latter is described as

> *more a matter of what people can do than something they have. Understanding involves action rather than possession ... In particular, there are many actions of mind that might be called "understanding performances". When people show these actions, then, we see evidence that they understand something ... Indeed, a key requirement of an understanding performance is significant novelty: explanation has to be in your own words, analogies must be fresh, not canned, and so on.*

ETAI conference workshop

The aims of the workshop were (1) to suggest a model for the assessment of the cognitive demands of reading comprehension questions, and (2) to demonstrate such an assessment of the reading comprehension questions on the recent 5-point Bagrut exam.

The following model integrates the theoretical models and research findings presented earlier. The model is both qualitative – in terms of the cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies required to process the text in order to answer the questions – and quantitative: For ease of assessment, a 3-point scale from high (Level 3) to low (Level 1), operationally defined in terms of the above strategies has been suggested:

Reference	Level		
	Level 1 *e.g., who, where, when, etc.*	**Level 2** *e.g., why, compare, summarize*	**Level 3** *e.g., agree/disagree & why, criticize, what if*
Bereiter & Scradamalia (1987)	knowledge-telling	knowledge-transforming	
Perkins (1993)	knowing	understanding	
Call (2000)	factual	inferential & interpretive	critical & evaluative
DeKonty et al. (2002)	literal	inference (low & high)	response
Bloom (1956)	knowledge & comprehension	application, analysis & synthesis	evaluation
Krathwohl (2002)	remember	understand, apply, analyze & synthesize	evaluate & create

The participants in the workshop were actively involved in processing the text on the recent 5-point Bagrut exam (Section 2): answering the questions, identifying the strategies required to do so; and, finally, assessing the level of the four reading comprehension questions following the text. Only one of the questions (a "why" or Level 2 question) required more than scanning the text for a key word from the question and paraphrasing (or merely copying) the relevant information. The results were similar to those received by the presenter's students in her reading course last semester with regard to the cognitive demands of the eight questions in Section 1.

Implications

A brief discussion of the implications of these findings for the instruction and assessment of reading comprehension followed. The presenter concluded that it still seems to be the case, as Chall (1996) deplores, that

> *the use of research and theory for improving practice has not been consistent. While research continues to produce findings in the same direction, practice seems to move back and forth. More often than not, it moves in a direction that is not supported by research and theory. It would seem that the time has come to give more serious attention to why practice has been so little influenced by existing research.*

The educational and research literature on learning in general and on learning from texts (i.e., reading) in particular (e.g., Dean & Sterling, 1997; Richetti & Shireen, 1999; Simpson, 1996; Harpaz & Lefstein, 2000) has for some time now suggested that students be encouraged to ask questions rather than to merely answer them. Asking questions is probably one of the most common ways of learning and knowing for children before they come to school. However, once they are there, the roles are reversed and it is those who know (the teachers) rather than those who do not (the students) who now ask the questions. Instead of developing into more powerful ways of learning, questions have become ways of testing.

There is very little ecological or educational validity in the overwhelming emphasis on lower-level literal questions. It would also be naïve to assume that assessment (i.e., the Bagrut reading comprehension exam) does not profoundly affect the way that reading is taught (Guenter & Anderson, 1991). It is recommended, then, that the English inspectorate, the teacher education colleges, and the leading textbook publishers seek out opportunities to promote the instruction and assessment of a higher-level mindful literacy.

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TEACHING CINEMA

By Nina Golomb

Why teach film?

Cinema is the great art form of the 20th Century. Movies are visual art and are part of everyone's life. A film can produce effects that would take longer and be far more difficult to produce in theatre, e.g., it can move between past, present and future in one frame. Because cinema is part of popular culture, it cannot be ignored in the same way as theatre, art and music often are.

Just as people need to know and understand literature and art, so they must be taught to understand cinema in order to reap the maximum benefits from this modern art form. When teaching literature, we teach decoding techniques, e.g., metaphor, alliteration, symbols, themes, etc. Only by understanding these techniques and knowing how to use them, can we truly appreciate literature. The same applies to cinema. Unless film has been studied, the viewer sits passively, unaware of the art form he is viewing and unaware of the subliminal language and subtle manipulations that are an integral part of film.

Take, for example, a painting. Without the knowledge of line, texture, focal point, shading etc., it is impossible to decode and deconstruct the art work. Gut feeling is the only means most people use when assessing and judging art. Deeper knowledge greatly enriches our visual experience. We become an active participant in the work of art. In the same way, true appreciation of cinema requires knowledge of the language as well as a rudimentary knowledge of cinematic devices.

The teaching of cinema can be successfully used with so-called strong and weak learners. All kinds of learners can greatly benefit from cinema as a subject. Cinema is a highly complex, magical and rich form of art which appeals to both students who are so-called intelligent and those who are not so intelligent in the conventional way. The more intelligent students can be taught to appreciate the rich meaning and subtle nuances that are inherent in cinema.

One of the greatest advantages in the teaching of cinema is that it doesn't only test verbal and written skills. Students who are visually and perceptually talented are given an opportunity to excel and even surpass the so-called 'intelligent' students. Cinema elicits visual and perceptual skills, which may be the strength of students who aren't skilled in subjects like mathematics and physics. Cinema allows the fostering of other kinds of intelligence, which are just as important. Therefore, the teaching of cinema can be highly motivating and satisfying for a wide range of students of different ability levels.

Joan Orkin (Reali School, Haifa) conducted an experiment with a group of weak students. I witnessed a few lessons, and was absolutely amazed by the level of motivation, interest and participation in the lesson. Students felt that they had something to contribute. I could not believe that this was a group of weak learners.

The most important reason to study film is that it is, quite simply, fun. It is highly motivating for students because film is common to all languages. The study of a visual text engages the students in a project in which they are unaware that they are studying in English. They use English in a completely natural way, unconscious of the fact that they are hearing and speaking the language.

The study of cinema encompasses a wide variety of language learning techniques. It touches the social domain because it is part of the real world. Themes arise in film that are relevant to the students' life experiences. Access to spoken and written language can be extracted from these lessons in a natural way. Appreciation and use of language is a natural part of this process. Social interaction occurs in natural situations, and verbal skills are constantly used, tested and challenged in order to discuss, describe, argue, debate, etc.

What do we need in order to study film?

1. A video
2. Permission to tape from the TV.
3. Knowledge of the language of film.

The language of film

Heightened awareness of the techniques and instruments used by film lead to a highly enhanced understanding and appreciation of this modern art form. The viewer who is film-literate will be able to experience a far greater feeling of satisfaction and enjoyment when he is able to analyze the movie and the way his viewing was manipulated etc.

Icon and index

Film moves very fast. It works on stereotypes – the opposite of literature. You decode a film without knowing why. For example, you know when danger is approaching by the clues provided in the film. When you see a man in a dark coat with long side-locks, you know he is religious. A dark man with sunglasses and greasy hair is evil or bad.

These are *icons* – iconography is an integral part of cinema, and knowledge of it is essential in order to fully understand and appreciate this art form. Film operates by offering several icons, to which the viewer responds.

An *index* is what the icon means. When you see a woman covered from head to toe, it is an icon of a Muslim woman. However, it may be an index of the subjugation of women. These two terms, *icons* and *indexes*, help us to understand the content of the film.

Shots, scenes and sequences

Instead of adjectives, nouns, alliteration, symbols and metaphors, film uses *shots* and *angles*. A shot is like a sentence. It lasts until the film is cut. A film is made up of different shots. Several shots make up a *scene* and several scenes make up a *sequence*. (In a book there are sentences, paragraphs and chapters). For example, in the movie *Amadeus* (Milos Forman) there are only three sequences in the two-hour movie.

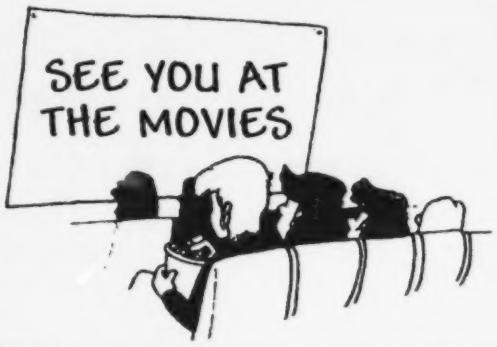
Angles

- *High angles*: These are shots taken from above which look down and make things diminish in importance. They give an omniscient feeling.
- *Low angles*: These shots magnify and distort/create a threatening feeling or a feeling of greater importance.
- *A pan shot*: The camera slowly moves across the screen, observing what is in the frame.
- *Tilt shot*: The camera moves slowly from the bottom of the frame upwards, creating an atmosphere of drama, expectation or anticipation. Tilting can be upwards or downwards. It can create opposite effects.
- *Close-up*: These shots include just the head. Extreme close-up focuses on part of the face. When a director wants an emotional response, he will use a close-up. A shot taken from the waist up is called a *medium shot* and if the whole body is in the frame, this is referred to as a *long shot*. An extreme long shot includes the whole body plus background.

  For example: A Western may start with a high angle shot of the prairie or low angle to make it important, with a tiny horse and rider in the frame, giving a sense of the environment you're about to enter. Cowboys are typically filmed at a low angle to create a feeling of largeness and importance.
- *Zoom*: There are also zoom-in and zoom-out shots, and accelerated movements towards or away from a focal point.
- *Mise-en-scene* refers to arrangements of objects in a frame.
- *Soft focus* refers to blurred lines which create a sense of romance or mystery

Tracks

Film works on two tracks: the *sound track* and the *visual track*. When students study film, they must divide their page into two. We are bombarded from two sides simultaneously and aren't always aware of this.



Choosing films

Showing students the movie of a work of literature that has been studied in class (*e.g., All my Sons* or *An Inspector Calls*) is not teaching film. A movie is chosen to *be "read"* in the same way as we read a literary text. The choice of movie, of course, depends on the individual teacher. It is a good idea to offer the students a choice of films and let them be partners in the decision. Some movies which have been taught with great success are *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* (Lasse Halstrom) and Johnny Depp's poignant performance as Edward Scissorshands works well with 7th/8th grade students. In addition, *The Mighty* (directed by Peter Chelsom) has scenes of vulnerability and labeling which are important issues for 10th/11th grade classes. The choice is endless.

Teaching cinema suits every type of English curriculum and certainly blends in well with group and project work. The greatest hurdle to overcome is mustering up the courage to start. Then witness your English class come alive!

Nina was born in South Africa. She studied English and psychology at Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg. She came on Aliyah in 1978. Nina lives in Haifa and teaches at the Alliance School where she is coordinator of the junior high and also teaches at the high school.

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WONDER WHERE I'M BOUND? SINGING FOLK SONGS IN ISRAELI SCHOOLS

By Lauren Ornstein

"Can't help but wonder where I'm bound". So sings Tom Paxton, American folk singer and songwriter. And so true that is! In this traveling song, "Where I'm Bound", the narrator recalls significant life experiences, people he's met and places he's been. I'd like to do the same in this article. My career as a folk singer (and teacher) has taken me off the beaten track and opened many doors.

Traversing this country, I had passed the road sign to Tamra many times but had never turned off into the town. I was honored to participate in "The English Day" at Alkhawarizmi High School there on May 5. I was invited by Muzna Bishara, English coordinator (see p.38), who had attended my workshop at the spring ETAI conference in Haifa ("Folk Songs – An Expression of Our Multi-Cultural Heritage"). I arrived at the school in time for the opening ceremony held in the courtyard where pupils and faculty were assembled. We were treated to a creative student production of "Eveline" (James Joyce), directed by actor Haled Abu-Ali from Akko. Although set in Dublin, appropriate Mid-Eastern music was chosen for the production, which, together with the young actors' interpretation of the story, gave it an entirely new life. Following the play, pupils took part in various workshops, including drama, games, designing T-shirts with English language slogans, and folk singing.

In my workshop, we traveled in song to Hawaii, N. Ireland and mainland U.S. Favorite songs of the participants were "Circle of the Sun" and "In the Name of All Our Children". I also had a chance to share my Appalachian dulcimer with one group. A teacher at the school explained to me that there's a similar Beduin folk instrument! The English Day culminated with another assembly and presentation of an impromptu skit from the drama workshop. Next, prizes were awarded to pupils who had read the most library books this school year. Muzna and her staff, as well as Principal Dr. Hani Kridin who was very supportive of the endeavor, deserve applause for organizing such an exciting multi-cultural learning experience for their students.

Backtracking in my steps a little further, I was most happy to return to The Arab Academic College in Haifa this spring for the ETAI conference. Once more, it was well-planned and organized. Our hosts and conveners were most cordial and made everyone feel at home. The student ushers were friendly and helpful and I enjoyed speaking with them in English! As last year, my workshops were attended by an enthusiastic and fun audience. Thank you all for coming!

Music crosses borders and brings down walls. We sang together songs from different times and places. American singer-songwriter Sally Rogers, influenced by Native Hawaiian Nona Beamer, wrote "In the Name of All Our Children", in which she incorporates at the end of each verse the traditional Hawaiian blessing, "in the name of all our children". "Circle of the Sun", also by Rogers, had everyone clapping hands and snapping fingers to the rhythm – a good simple song that can be easily sung and taught with no other accompaniment. "Bonny Portmore" (traditional Irish) and "Coming of the Roads" (Billy Ed Wheeler, US) both relate to environmental issues. I connected them to our local Israeli environmental problems, mentioning our almost non-existent forests cut down for railroad ties and the Trans-Israel highway. History repeats itself. "Universal Soldier" and "Now That the Buffalo's Gone", written by Native American Buffy Sainte-Marie, are outstanding songs that are always, unfortunately, relevant. We also sang "Your Daughters and Your Sons" (Tommy Sands, N. Ireland), "Last House on the Street" (Colum Sands, N. Ireland) and "Hey Nelly, Nelly" (Shel Silverstein and Jim Friedman, US) which are history lessons encapsulated in song. We summed up the session with "We'll Pass Them On" by Pete Seeger. The complete song sheets can be found on the ETAI website.

Going back a little further in time, last winter in Jerusalem, I had the pleasure of meeting Colum Sands and Israeli storyteller, Sharon Aviv. They met at a festival in England, found much common ground and together created a program, "Talking to the Wall".(also the name of their CD). They say, "Traveling with these songs and stories from Belfast to Jerusalem, it would have been difficult not to notice how external trappings and wrappings of religion often get in the way of the inner direction – Didn't someone once say that religion was like a large group of people trying to get to the same destination but, because they all started out from different starting places, they end up disagreeing bitterly about the 'right way' of getting there?"

Colum returned to Israel a few months ago, in spite of the winds of war in the region, for a ten day tour with Sharon. I was honored to host them both in my home and at The High School for Environmental Studies at Midreshet Ben Gurion, where they sang and told tales to the pupils. Of course, a lot of preparation was needed in class in order for their performance to succeed. Our small but excellent staff worked hard to make that happen. In every class we discussed the history and religious conflicts of Ireland and N. Ireland. I taught everyone two songs which I asked Colum to sing, songs I felt were appropriate. Our hard work paid off and for over an hour, the students sat spellbound. It was a rare opportunity to look at ourselves and our problems here in Israel, but at the same time distancing ourselves as we looked at and tried to comprehend the conflicts in other countries. It was an enriching and fulfilling experience for all – pupils, teachers and artists!

And the road goes on with its twists and turns. "I can't help but wonder where I'm bound, where I'm bound....."

Lauren Ornstein – laurie@boker.org.il – is English teacher and Department Coordinator at The School for Environmental Studies at Midreshet Ben-Gurion where she also lives. She is a folk singer and performs at folk venues around the country.

"I'm lousy at spelling because of my parents. They grew up listening to the Beatles, Monkees and Byrds!"

STORYTELLING IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM: A MULTIPURPOSE TOOL

By Leslie Cohen

Storytelling in the English classroom is viewed here as a learning process with multiple purposes and benefits which directly reflect the goals of both communicative methodology and the new Israeli English Curriculum. The uses of storytelling that this article explores include some obvious ones: the motivation and entertainment of the students, the improvement of listening skills, fluency in speaking, and – to a certain extent – pronunciation. Less obvious advantages are the strengthening of groupwork skills and group interaction, and the creation of an atmosphere in which learning is both pleasurable and possible for every student in a heterogeneous class.

In order to use storytelling in the English classroom to its greatest advantage, I recommend a process which begins with the teacher as role model and ends with the full participation of the class. *Step one* in this process is a class session which introduces the learners to storytelling and demonstrates storytelling techniques.

Thus, the first storytelling lesson begins with a story told to the class by the teacher. This story should be selected by the teacher on the basis of its appropriateness for the group as a whole. It should be age-appropriate, suited to the interests of the particular individuals in the class, and the language should be at a level which is comprehensible to all of the learners. That often involves some adaptation of the story – or at least some paraphrasing – by the teacher. For most classes (except for very advanced learners), I suggest using a fairly short story with a lot of action and few details – one which will hold their attention throughout. In addition, the story should be one that the learners are not familiar with. This creates a real motivation to listen carefully and a real interest on the part of the pupils.

Immediately after the story has been told, the teacher should check to see if the learners have understood it by asking them to reconstruct it orally. This can be done in several ways. For example, sequencing can be designed as a group project. In this case, the teacher writes seven to ten sentences summarizing the story on large pieces of paper. These sentence strips are distributed to the students, who are seated in groups of three to five. The students read their sentences to each other in their small groups. The group who thinks it has the first sentence (which often begins with "Once upon a time...") reads its sentence aloud and tacks it on the blackboard. Each group reads its sentence aloud to the class, trying to reconstruct the sequence of the story. At the end, the whole story – in summary form – appears on the blackboard.

Another way to reconstruct the story is by tacking vocabulary cards on the blackboard to elicit the sentences. The teacher asks one student to remember how the story opened, and shows a word card with a key word to serve as a cue. The words on the word cards should be familiar to the students. The focus of this activity is <u>not</u> to expand the learners' vocabulary; it is, rather, an opportunity to improve their speaking and listening skills. Since the reconstruction of the story through the use of word cards is more demanding than sequencing the story by the use of sentence strips, it can be done with stronger classes, or it can be done after the sentence strip sequencing activity.

To further reinforce an understanding of the story, *reading* is suggested. However, since the students have already *heard* the story, reading it will probably be boring for them. An alternative way of getting them to go over the story another time by reading it is to work in pairs. Each partner has a list of sentences that summarize the story, but each sentence is missing one key word. The lists that each partner has are different; their sentences lack different words. By reading their sentences aloud to each other, they repeat the story (in summary form), saying the sentences aloud, and they each fill in the missing word when their partner reads his/her sentence aloud.

The next step in the process is the organization of group work. After the teacher's story is told and worked on, the students are to be divided into pairs or groups and given their own stories. I suggest that this *project* be done when the teacher knows the class fairly well. That may mean waiting until the middle of the school year, or starting at the beginning of the year with a class you have taught before.

The teacher will need one story for every three to five students in the class. Longer stories can be divided amongst five pupils, shorter ones among three or four. Weaker learners can be given even shorter stories, which can be divided into two or three (even if they are very short). Or weaker learners can be placed with

stronger learners, but given smaller portions of the story to tell. This will make it possible for every student in the class to participate. The teacher may want to decide on the composition of the work groups beforehand. In any case, each child should receive his or her own copy of the story, with the divisions of the story marked off. Students can decide who gets which portion of the story.

The teacher should provide a glossary of difficult words on the same page as the story, so that pupils will not have difficulties reading the stories on their own. It is important to recall that this activity is not meant to be a vocabulary expansion activity, but rather a fluency exercise. Of course, the teacher will circulate and help the work groups as needed.

I suggest that only one story be told by a work group in each successive lesson. In a class of 35-40, that will mean spreading out the storytelling over a period of about a month. The teacher should make a chart with the dates of each story, allowing pupils to volunteer to tell their story on the day of their choice. Opening each lesson with a story can create a very pleasant atmosphere in the classroom.

In most cases, I believe that the teacher should make worksheets, word cards, or sentence strips to accompany each story, and bring them to class. When the group has told its story, they may be responsible for handing out the materials and conducting the activity. However, in cases where greater control over the class is required, the teacher may conduct the activity. In more advanced classes, students may be given the additional homework assignment of creating the worksheets. However, the teacher should check them and correct them (if necessary) before making multiple copies.

I believe that this storytelling project can be done even at the elementary school level. I also think that it can be repeated with the same class several years in a row, by using different stories. Finally, it can be used to introduce creative *writing* projects – but that is a topic for a different article!

Leslie Cohen – leslie_c@ein-hashofet.co.il – is a member of Kibbutz Ein Hashofet. She teaches English at the Academic Arab College of Education, Haifa and has taught at the elementary and high school levels, as well. Leslie's book, Facets of the Poet, was published in 2001, and she has had many articles, book reviews, poems and short stories published in a variety of magazines and journals.

"The way I see it, is, if you get hurt, your mommy makes it all better. So, if a mommy were in charge of the world..."

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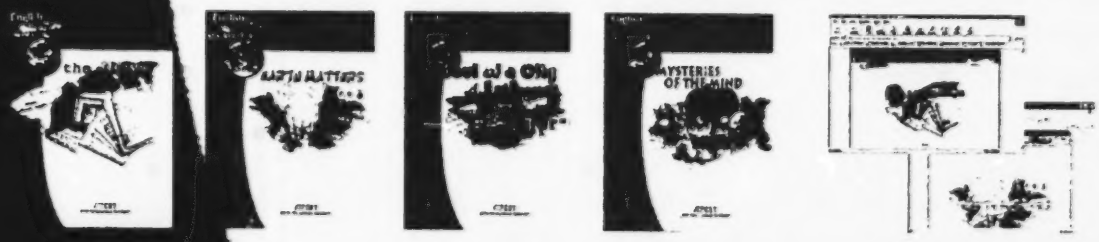

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ENGLISH COORDINATORS' FORUM

By Jessie Koren

This presentation is based on a summary of two workshops given at the Spring ETAI Conference in Haifa. The first workshop was a lecture given by Ms Muzna Bishara, a young English coordinator in the north. The second workshop was an open discussion of common problems coordinators face.

The principle issue raised by all coordinators was the problem of time. Where can we find the time to complete all of the tasks that we feel we must accomplish? Though time is sometimes used as an excuse for not doing something, most coordinators feel that they can never achieve all of the goals they have set for themselves, such as holding staff meetings at set times. Though the Ministry demands that principals set aside a specific time for staff meetings, most coordinators find themselves wondering if the effort that it takes to get teachers to attend meetings at inconvenient hours is worth it.

This brings us to a second issue of enforcement. It is one thing to demand that your students attend classes and do homework and quite another to demand something similar from your fellow colleagues. Betty Keren from Nesher High School described how difficult it was for her to get all of her teachers to carry out the syllabus (that is, teach all of the literature, read all of the books). Tsvia, a coordinator from a Yeshiva Toranit, related that she demands that her teachers take in-service training courses, and if not, she will not allow them to teach high school classes. All of the coordinators agreed that getting experienced teachers to carry out the new curriculum is far more difficult than convincing the newer, inexperienced teachers to do so. For the coordinators from the Arab sector, who find themselves among the youngest members of their staffs, this challenge is even more daunting.

Hiring and firing English teachers can often be the sole responsibility of the principal in the Arab sector. Finding the right teacher is often the greatest problem all coordinators must overcome. One principal told his coordinator that if the new teacher fails, she as coordinator has failed. This puts an extra burden on the shoulders of the coordinator who may not have had a say in hiring the new teacher. Fran Sokol from Tefen Experimental School, where all classes are heterogeneous, related that her school demands a certain kind of teacher that can fit in with the kind of teaching and learning carried on there. Therefore, as coordinator, she must play a decisive role in hiring. One possible recommendation is to start looking for teachers very early in the year. Even if you think there won't be a need for a new teacher, whenever you hear of a good one, perk up your coordinators' ears and start making inquiries. For me personally, this system has worked quite well.

Teamwork was cited as one of the ways to help teachers realize their potential. Knowing how to work on a team doesn't always make a great teacher, however. Though English proficiency is certainly important, a beginning teacher can gradually improve her English as she begins to teach. Enthusiasm and willingness to learn were referred to as basic requirements for good teachers, both experienced and inexperienced.

One principle followed by all of the coordinators is that of distributing weak and strong classes among all of the teachers. Though there are definite preferences and proclivities, each teacher should accept any class given her and maintain a high professional level, no matter what the class level may be.

The subject of observations was mentioned as an important element of the coordinator's role. Though many coordinators find this task unpleasant and unrewarding, constructive comments can be helpful, especially since we are rarely observed. One coordinator mentioned that she invites her colleagues to her lessons before she herself observes theirs. In this way she shows them that she is willing to expose herself, so they should feel less fearful. In addition, having the coordinator invite her teachers to observe her illustrates another role of the coordinator – that of being a model for other teachers.

Although the subject of the new curriculum was brought up, there wasn't sufficient time to relate to this subject in depth. Modularity will no doubt provide coordinators with a tremendous amount of paperwork and no lack of organizational problems. The increasing number of students with learning accommodations is an issue we did not have time to discuss, either. What is certainly true is that we as coordinators must delegate responsibility to the members of our staff so that we won't overload ourselves with an impossible burden. Most important, as mentioned by Muzna Bishara, we

must treat our fellow colleagues with respect and think of our staff as a learning and teaching community.

The need for a coordinators' forum was expressed by the coordinators who attended the conference, and perhaps this could become a permanent fixture in the upcoming ETAI conferences.

Jessie – jessieko@zahav.net.il – is the English coordinator at Kadoorie High School and has been teaching English at all levels for the past thirty years. Besides regular and special education classes, she teaches Technical English to practical engineers, translation to high school students and marks Bagrut exams in the summer.

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ENGLISH DAY AND MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

By Rawia Hayik

Every few years, I plan an English day in my school based on a different theme. This year, I chose Gardener's Multiple Intelligences theory to be the basis of my school's English day, on the assumption that every pupil deserves to use English in a way or ways that he/she enjoys, at least for one day. A pupil who is musically intelligent, for instance, will learn and sing songs in English, while a pupil whose bodily-kinesthetic intelligence is high will have the chance to practice English through movement.

In my school, Elementary School A in Sakhnin, we teach English from the fourth to the sixth grade. We have three classes at each level, which are all divided into five heterogeneous groups. On the English Day, there were five different stations for each level: story telling, handicrafts, songs, indoor games and outdoor games. The groups at each level took turns in participating in all five stations.

Each station was based on one or more types of intelligence. Needless to say, the verbal linguistic intelligence was obvious at all the stations because this was an English day. However, it was more stressed at certain stations than at the others.

Here is a breakdown of the activities held at the stations for the three different levels.

The Fourth Grades

1. Spatial Intelligence: Shaping letters out of dough and baking them (with the help of mothers).
2. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence and Interpersonal Intelligence: Indoor games: – "Letters Mat": each pupil throws a bean bag on the letters mat and has to say a word that begins with that letter; – Table games on letters, colours, parts of the body, adjectives, etc… that are played in groups of 4-5 pupils.
3. Musical Intelligence: Learning a new song ("If You're Happy" from the *Candy Can Do It* video cassette) and singing along.
4. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence: Outdoor games: – "Snatch the Bottle", "The Colour Wheel" (on colours, adjectives, parts of the body, objects in the classroom, etc).
5. Intrapersonal Intelligence: Reading a story ("The Little Red Hen") to the pupils and letting them express how they feel about it through discussing the values of helping each other. Pupils can make their own books or collages based on the story by drawing, writing, cutting and pasting pictures from magazines.

The Fifth Grades

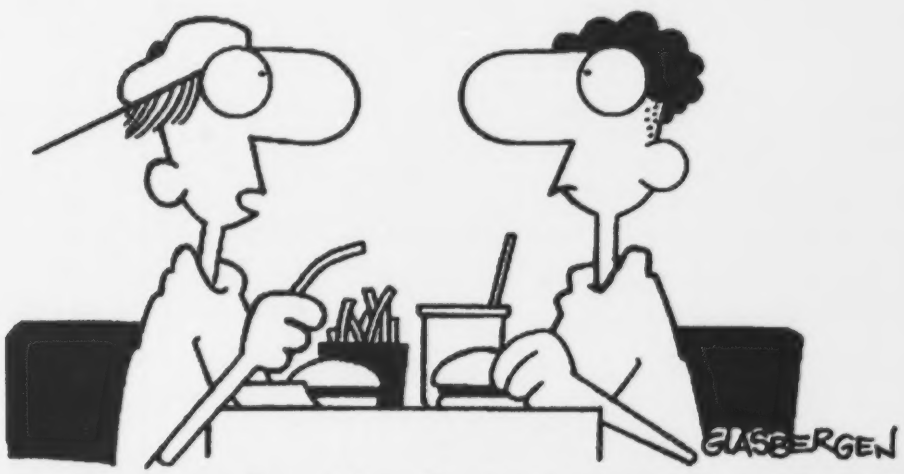
1. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence and Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence: Making a shape of a hand and writing sentences about the pupil himself on each finger.
2. Math-Logical Intelligence: Maze games and table games.
3. Musical Intelligence: Learning a new song ("Old MacDonald Had a Farm") from the video cassette of *Candy Can Do It*.
4. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence and Interpersonal Intelligence: Outdoor games: – "Colour Wheel" (on topics for the fifth grade level - animals, clothes, furniture) – "Right or Wrong"
5. Intrapersonal Intelligence: Reading the story "I Like It When" to the kids and letting them make their own books in which they express what makes them happy through drawing, writing, cutting and pasting from their worksheets.

The Sixth Grades

1. Spatial Intelligence and Intrapersonal Intelligence: Reading the story "The Boy And The Donkey" to the pupils, acting it and then letting them express their feelings on the topics "Believe in yourself" / " You can't please all the people all the time" / "You must do what you think is right".
2. Musical Intelligence: Learning a new song, "It's a small world after all", and making a wall of words from the song with the help of the arts teacher.
3. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence and Math-Logical Intelligence: The game "Scavenger Hunt" in which the answers are all numbers.
4. Verbal Linguistic Intelligence and Interpersonal Intelligence: Table games in groups of 4-5.
5. Bodily Kinesthetic Intelligence: Handicrafts: – Making a chain of slogans: pupils pull folded pieces of paper from a box, read the slogans written on them, write them on strips of coloured cardboard and sample the strips together to make a chain.

All the pupils from the same level took part in all the stations for each level. Each pupil found at least one interesting activity that matched one of his/her multiple intelligences.

Rawia – billy-w@zahav.net.il – teaches English at Elementary School "A" in Sakhnin. She worked as an English counselor in the northern district for three years (but not this year, due to lack of budget). She is also one of the writers of the bank of performance tasks for elementary schools.



"I forgot to make a back-up copy of my brain, so everything I learned last semester was lost."

EXTENSIVE AND SEMI-EXTENSIVE READING – REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

By Rachel Duzzy

"What is reading but silent conversation?" (Walter Savage Landor)

The Nofei-Arbel School on Kibbutz Ginossar is an experimental school for language arts. For the past 14 years, I've been teaching English there (5th – 8th Grades) and for all this time have been running an extensive reading program. In this article, I intend to share with the readers the outlines of this program, to support it with examples from the field and to back it up with literature on the topic. The article is based on a talk I gave at the ETAI Spring Conference "Together" in Haifa on April 8th, 2003.

Rationale

One of the standards for the Domain of Appreciation states: "Pupils appreciate literature that is written in English and through it develop sensitivity to a variety of cultures" (English Curriculum).

Extensive reading is one of the principal ways to develop appreciation of literature. Krashen (1993:84) wrote: "When children read for pleasure, when they get 'hooked on books', they acquire, involuntarily and without conscious effort, nearly all of the so-called 'language skills'. ... They become adequate readers, acquire a large vocabulary, develop the ability to understand and use complex grammatical constructions, develop a good writing style and become good spellers."

Furthermore, "Extensive Reading has a role in developing fluent second language readers because it develops sight vocabulary, enhances automaticity, develops general vocabulary knowledge and different knowledge types." (Elisheva Barkon, ACT, Oranim, April 2003. Based on Day & Bamford, 1998).

Goals for the Extensive Reading Program

When sitting down to write the outline of the ER program for my classes, I decided on a few goals. Keeping these goals in mind and referring back to them helps me to check whether or not they have been achieved (backwash), to reflect on the program and to draw conclusions. Here are the goals:

Students will:

- be provided with experience in the target language as used in books
- be motivated to read more in the target language by being induced to read in the target language as a pleasurable entertaining activity
- expand vocabulary, improve grammar, spelling, reading strategies, reading speed and writing skills
- be introduced to authentic literature in the target language and encouraged to read and appreciate it
- be challenged to think critically
- improve their self-esteem and gain confidence in the target language
- see the connection between language, literature and culture (Domain of Appreciation)

Getting Started

In order to motivate the students to read in the target language, they participate in some introductory book activities which take about 3 – 4 lessons. Here is a brief description of these activities:

1. Background surveys on reading

These surveys are generally administered at a very early stage of the school year but they can be administered at the end of the year as well. They help me collect valuable data about my students' reading habits, attitudes to reading, difficulties, likes and dislikes. Younger and weaker students fill in questionnaires written in Hebrew, or read out loud in English.

2. Getting to know the English section of the school library

The class is taken to the school library in order to show them where the English books are stored. They then learn about the grading system (stickers of different colors), and how to sign for a book. This entire lesson is spent in the library examining books, reading and sharing.

3. Round Robin (stations)

Students form five or six groups and work in rotation on different activities. Each activity is located on a separate desk (station), where the activity sheets and a variety of books are to be found. They get 6 – 7 minutes to complete each task, and on my signal they must move on to the next station until all the activities are done and the round completed. Some of the activities are: a book quiz using cartoons only, matching Hebrew and English titles, matching blurbs to titles, rating captions from books, and more. At the end of the round, the groups share their findings. The Round Robin activity is highly successful at all levels.

4. Getting started

Now it's time to start the "real thing". The students are told which day of the week and at which hour they'll be having their reading lesson. (It's probably better to start every English lesson with 10 – 15 minutes reading rather than a longer period once a week during the reading lesson. However, I tried this and it didn't work for me). The students also get a folder, a title page on which is written "Quiet Reading" or a similar title, a reading log and a typed list of about 30 short enjoyable reading tasks which they can choose from. The folder will serve as the students' reading portfolio.

Semi-Extensive Reading (SE)

Judging from my experience, semi-extensive reading is a good way to start. In semi-extensive reading lessons, the entire class reads the same book with assistance from the teacher. SE reading gives the students the chance to expand their general understanding of the book as well as of literature and gives weak or reluctant readers a fresh new start before they move on to reading independently.

It is crucial to pick a book which appeals to the majority of the students and one which caters to the average reading level of the class; in other words, not too easy and not too difficult. (Remember the surveys? This is the time to read them again). Which books to choose is entirely up to the teacher. I myself tend to go for the classics. Nevertheless, it is important to allow avid, independent readers to read books of their own choice and not to insist on a book that the teacher has chosen for the class.

Semi-Extensive reading is different from Extensive reading in more than one way. One main difference is the preparation on the teacher's side. The teacher might want to gloss over some new/key words, revise what was read last time, elicit predictions, ask questions, and so on. Also, in SE reading the students are requested to do some follow up activities which are usually short and fun-like.

Reading Tasks

Generally speaking, in reading lessons, students should only read because "The primary activity of a reading lesson should be learners' reading texts – not listening to the teacher, not reading comprehension questions, not writing answers to comprehension questions ..." (Day and Bamford, 2002. based on: Williams, R. 1986).

However, Day and Bamford also state in their new book (in press) that: "At the same time, teachers may ask students to complete follow-up activities based on their reading ... The reasons for this are various: to find out what the student understood and experienced from the reading; to keep track of what and how much students read; to make reading a shared experience; to link reading to the aspects of the curriculum".

I tend to agree with Bamford and Day on the importance and the nature of the reading tasks, but at the same time I am aware of the fact that many teachers are against demanding book tasks (see the ETNI poll results on reading tasks on the ETNI site, www.etni.org.il). Students should not be forced to do a reading task each time they read – this should be optional. But I do demand about ten short tasks during the school year (for the reasons mentioned above). It is a minimal demand and there are many students who would like to hand in many more tasks. Taking into consideration that the reading lesson lasts 40-45 minutes, it is very difficult for most students to read throughout it. The tasks act as a nice variation, as most are of an artistic, fun-like nature and are not evaluated with grades but are corrected, typed and filed in the reading portfolio.

I find that the tasks which are very popular are ones of an artistic nature, viz. anything that has to do with drawing, arts and crafts, making models, designing a costume for a character from a book, and more. Another very successful task is preparing a mobile of pictures, words and sentences taken from a book (mainly for weak students) while the stronger ones write their own sentences. Yet another activity is for students to choose a way how to convince the rest of the class to read the book – this may be done orally or through an advertisement or poster.

Reading Club

Three to four times a year, we hold a "Reading Club" activity, where the students display their reading tasks and reading projects. This gives them a chance to share books, talk about a book, recommend a book and to reflect. The "Reading Club" activity helps them choose their future books as well. Guests, usually school staff, are invited to these events and they express their admiration of the students' work. Seeing the students' beaming faces says it all. Students look forward to these "Reading Club" meetings and even the weakest and the most reluctant display their work. It is important to mention that the work displayed is work which has gone through some of the process writing stages, namely: drafting, correcting and, finally, displaying.

In conclusion

This article does not attempt to cover all the issues concerning Extensive Reading and does not relate to S.E.N students, reading assessment, budgets, and more. It is not a guide, either, and the program described here might not work for every teacher. I do, however, hope that it leaves the readers with food for thought.

Appendix A: Tips

- I - 1 (I minus one): Students should be encouraged to pick books within their competence in order to develop automaticity and sight vocabulary (Elisheva Barkon, ACT 2, Oranim, April 14, 2003. Based on: Day & Bamford 1998. Extensive Reading in Second Language Classroom. Cambridge University Press).
- In order to help students pick books which are suitable for their level, the teacher can do the following: Type a caption from the book and delete some words. If the student can figure out the content, then the book is suitable (Elisheva Barkon. ACT 2 Oranim. April 14, 2003). Another good tip is the "five finger rule". Students open the book to any random page and count the words they don't understand. If they don't understand five words, then the book is not suitable for their level (Anat Marom, 1996).
- The students should be encouraged to read a new book once every two weeks. However, the teacher needs to take into consideration the length of the book.
- It is advisable that the teacher know the content of most of the books in his/her library. This is important because pupils tend to consult with the teacher about books.

Appendix B: Extensive Reading Program – Step by Step

- Setting goals
- Reading surveys.
- Enjoyable reading activities (Book quizzes, Round Robin, etc).
- Semi-Extensive Reading (entire class reads the same book) followed by short reading tasks, reading projects, performance tasks, etc.
- Assessing reading:
- Why? To check whether or not my goals have been achieved (backwash).
- How? Portfolios, reading logs, Bookworm awards, peer assessment, checklists and rubrics, etc.
- "Reading Club" Activities.

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THE BOOKS FOR ISRAEL PROJECT

By Jade Bar-Shalom

Editor's Note: This is an amazing project – read about what dedicated people have managed to do!

The Books for Israel Project (B4I) was founded to help Israeli children from all ethnic and religious groups in any geographic location in the country gain access to authentic English language literature by stocking the libraries of participating schools with quality second hand books donated by English speaking communities abroad. All books are sent free of cost to schools that take on "flagship" status in their community (see about "flagships" below). Each donated book has a special plate pasted on the inside cover which bears the "Books for Israel" logo and that notes the individual or community who donated the book with love to children in Israel.

How does the Project Work?

B4I promotes the need for English language literacy and supportive communications abroad. When people write in that they are establishing a drive, they are asked to preview "profile" sheets and to choose a community of schools they wish to adopt. They are then matched with an umbrella group of schools in one location of Israel and specifically with a "flagship school" and a "flagship school organizer" who handles all communications with them. The donor community corresponds directly with their adopted flagship and sends books directly to that school. The books are distributed by the flagship to its own library and to libraries of schools within its umbrella group. All books are made the registered property of the school libraries.

In short, B4I is a massive matchmaking service. We have no offices, no officers, and no board of directors. No one at any level of this project receives any funds, salaries or stipends for all their efforts whatsoever. My sister, Rena Cohen, my husband Ilan and myself coordinate all communications, usually between 11 pm and 3 am. It really does all pay off so long as the Israeli schools take up their end of the responsibility and communicate as required with their donors.

What Materials Can the Project Provide for Israeli Schools?

Before books are sent, bookdrive organizers and volunteers abroad scan all the books for quality and content. They remove any books that are worn out or unsuitable for a child to handle. They then work from our on-site general lists of acceptable materials. Sometimes the lists are modified by special requests sent from their adopted "flagship" based on that community's particular needs.

EFL materials are not available through this project, although sometimes graded readers and ESL related books find their way into the collection boxes.

For the most part, book drives turn up wonderful soft and hard cover books, books accompanied by listening tapes, dictionaries, encylopedia sets, classic novels and beautifully illustrated children stories, and sometimes video stories. The material collected reflects the favorite reading materials of individuals in the donor communities. Old magazines and textbooks are not collected unless the flagship school specifically requests these. Materials not suitable for sending are sold to used bookstores to help raise funds for shipping the selected books to the flagship school.

But How Can We Teach With Authentic Language English Texts?

Some teachers have dismissed this project out of hand since it cannot supply EFL-monitored and edited texts. Others, however, are successfully taking up the challenge, not only with their native-speaker students, but with lower level readers as well.

Educators are experimenting on ways to use this free source of authentic English language literature to enrich vocabulary and develop a love for literature. Teachers and students are becoming increasingly resourceful at adapting themselves to the possibilities of learning in different ways, using dictionaries and private vocabulary lists to help themselves. This project is NOT an answer for the shortage of funds for education or the lack of funds for EFL readers. It is, however, an alternative source of wonderful books and a great way for teachers and students to develop meaningful communications with communities abroad.

For our stronger readers, the wealth of different English dialects, styles, and national story favorites can help enrich appreciation for English literature and the diversity of language standards. For all readers, the variety of cultures expressing themselves in English, including immigrant, aboriginal and postcolonial writers, helps to encourage respect for all peoples, cultures, and living things.

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How Do Potential Donors Find Out about the Project?

Rena and I initially began by writing letters and e-mail messages to contacts in the United States and other English-speaking countries and by asking colleagues to do the same. We have spoken about B4I at a number of public functions. Thanks to the support of other people with access to media, B4I has received local promotion through donated radio airtime, articles in local and community press, and through internet links. We ask Israeli school teachers from flagship schools to use their trips abroad as opportunities to spread news of the project. In addition, the B4I website, enabled by the help of Mitzi Gefen with space provided by Elisha Babyoff of edu-negev, is now easily accessed internationally by Google and other search engines.

Who Are the People Collecting Books for this Project?

Sometimes we hear from community political or religious leaders. Sometimes a group of boy or girl scouts in some remote region decides to adopt a region of Israeli schools. Sometimes adults from a variety of professions, elderly people in retirement homes, or individual school-aged children write to us to find out how to start a bookdrive. Bookdrives are being run by individuals and groups representing a wide range of religious, ethnic, and geographic communities in many states in the U.S. Recently a new bookdrive has begun in Montreal, Canada, and we are hearing good news of potential new bookdrives springing up in Australia and most recently in the Netherlands. We hope someday that communities in South Africa, England, Ireland and Scotland will also get involved.

By making ours an entirely volunteer, grassroots effort, B4I enables people from a variety of political and religious persuasions to help out communities they choose to adopt directly, and to witness the impact of their efforts by hearing from, and in some cases, visiting, their adopted schools. As a result of bookdrive collection efforts, diverse communities of people who have never met are being brought together through this project, making their shared support for Israel a reason for developing communication and friendship between their different denominations, religious persuasions and ethnic groups. Sometimes book collections become an opportunity for fruitful discussions and education about Israel and current events in the Middle East, offering opportunities to correct misinformation in the media and to hear other voices they might not have recognized before. The bookdrives can therefore enable an appreciation for the diversity of Israeli society and Israeli opinion.

Usually only a few people in each area abroad take on the responsibility for running a bookdrive for their town, city, or a larger geographic community. These people are usually employed full time, with families of their own. They run their bookdrives and all communications during what could be their free evenings, weekends, and often during hours most folk usually set aside for blessed sleep. The bookdrives take a lot of effort but they also help to build a lot of love and cooperation.

It has been amazing to hear from people over seventy years of age who have taken on this project, as well as to hear from children who collect books from friends and relatives in honor of their Bar or Bat-mitzvahs, grade school graduations, and other events. Bookdrives are done in commemoration of people who have passed away, and in honor of *Brit-Milas*, *Britas*, Christenings, and birthdays. A majority of the bookdrives are organized by teachers and librarians with the help of their pupils, fellow colleagues, parents, and others in their communities. Bookdrive organizers have developed resourceful ways to raise funds to cover the costs of mailing the books out to Israel, such as bakesales, performances by and for community children, and collection boxes set along the boxes for dropping off donated books. None of the people involved in organizing book drives receive financial compensation for the good work they do. Bookdrive organizers are really fine, dedicated people. They have a variety of opinions, political perspectives, and motivations, but they share a concern for the future of our youth and a desire to help foster fluent international communications and peace in our region and in the world.

About the Flagships and Member Schools: Who Are Recipients of Books in the B4I Project?

As of May, 2003, there are some thirty active flagship schools in Israel. As a group, the flagship schools represent every major religious, ethnic, and denominational group in Israel. There are religious and non-religious schools, Jewish, Christian, Druse, Muslim, Bedoin, and multi-language/multi-cultural schools that take on flagship status in their community.

To become a flagship, the school must have one or two persons that are keen on taking responsibility for communications with the donors, and are willing to reach out to English teachers in other schools in their area. They must decide upon at least two other schools that teach grades that their school does not teach, unless their school complex covers a number of grades. In this manner,

incoming books can immediately be sorted jointly by area English teachers according to levels and placed in the proper school libraries. The flagship organizers must also adopt at least two other schools that expressly teach a sector of the population that is different from their own and bring these schools into their flagship. Therefore, a flagship at a Jewish-religious girl's ulpana teaching junior and senior high school levels may share grade school level books with a religious primary school. Once their library is more or less established, they must also begin sharing books with other schools they have adopted, such as secular schools in their area, or schools serving a different religious or ethnic group. Similarly, kibbutzim schools share books with Muslim and Bedouin or Druse schools, Christian schools share books with Jewish and Muslim schools, etc., etc. As a result, cooperative communications of support and educational interest have sprung up on a grassroots level based on need and a mutual desire to have all our children better equipped to comprehend and communicate in the international language of commerce, technology, and diplomacy. Teachers are sharing ways that they are discovering to cope with the circumstances and to make use of these authentic language texts. Moreover, they are finding ways to get the students involved in productive, although perhaps limited, communications with children and adults in the donor communities abroad. This project is therefore effectively doing much for the material promotion of peace between our diverse populations.

Some of the original number of flagship schools were taken off our list because they did not function as flagships. Sometimes the volunteer teachers who took on flagship coordination proved too overwhelmed by teaching and personal situations to maintain the responsibility a flagship involves. They might leave their own school principals, fellow staff and nearby school staff members entirely unaware of the project. Books would arrive and there was no one prepared to handle and distribute them. Worse, we have had to remove flagships from our lists because there was no one there capable or willing to sustain the necessary pen-pal like relationship with their bookdrive organizers. If I have had any deep level of regret and shame in this project it is when a school community writes terse notes in response to earnest messages from their bookdrive organizers asking for updates on what is going on in Israel, or when Israeli teachers have complained that they don't think it is necessary to write so much or so often. This has left Rena and myself with sad and angry messages from bookdrive organizers who want to know why they cannot get some communication in return for their efforts. Events like that make me want to crawl under the rug in sorrow and shame.

On the other hand, if anything of late has brought me great joy, it has been reading messages of support between donors and flagship schools. Amazing bonds of friendship and empathy are building up through the exchange of messages, books, and visits. Some of the photos and messages exchanged are posted on the B4I website. It is simply a joy and an inspiration to see so much care and concern, as well as serious efforts to find ways to improve English language learning levels here.

Do You Want to Become a Flagship?

We are happy to match up donor communities abroad with schools that are willing to take on flagship status, but you must be seriously willing to write on the e-mail at least once a week with your donors and you must take on all flagship responsibilities. Teachers applying now should expect that they may only be matched up with donors starting in the fall when many bookdrives will pick up again. If you would like your schools to benefit from this Project, please do the following:

1. Get an e-mail address for this purpose and check the e-mail regularly.
2. Send us an e-mail with the name of your school, your school phone, school fax, the name of your school principal, and the school's full mailing address, including zip code. Tell us your name, your e-mail address, your home phone number and a cell phone number if you have one. Provide us a short "Profile" that we can use to promote your flagship abroad: explain something about your school population, grades taught, number of students, ethnic make-up, and need for books. Include information about about your geographic community, particularly its history, and some words about the current economic situation there – whether your school population includes new immigrants, deprived students, learning disabled kids, etc. Let us know where your school is situated if you are outside a major city or town. Also, provide us with the names of the schools that would be brought under your flagship's umbrella, giving a brief description of each of the schools, including grades taught, number of students, the ethnic or religious communities they represent, the schools' telephone numbers and the name of the English teachers there with whom you have already been in contact who are willing to have their students write thank you letters when books are received.

3. We will be in contact with you and confirm your details. Once you are accepted as a flagship school, your flagship will be placed on the list with which we approach new donors. As soon as you receive a donor you should begin e-mail correspondence. You will probably receive a number of donor communities over time before any of the books actually arrive. Bookdrives usually run for a period of some 2 – 6 months before mailings of the choicest materials begin. The books then take about three months to arrive by boat to your school. You must communicate with your assigned donors regularly, amicably, and informatively about your work, your communities' holidays, and activities in a friendly and informative way. Communications must continue prior to and after receiving books via e-mail, the Project's website, and by written letters from the students. Based on your communications, donors will often be inspired to run yet another bookdrive on your behalf in a few months time. The bookdrive organizers are working people who are making a great effort and who need to be encouraged. Teachers taking on flagship coordination must be willing to become the goodwill ambassadors for their local community and Israel. It is simply unacceptable to wait for books to arrive before getting involved in regular and meaningful communictions.

4. Make sure that you actually organize an umbrella of schools in your area with whom to share books. This means getting in touch with at least one English teacher at each of the four schools who can take on responsibility for their end of the project. While you must have access to internet, the schools you share books with are not required to have internet access. However, the English teacher at schools under your flagship must oversee that their pupils thank the donors by means of printed letters, cards, and pictures when books are distributed to them. Remember, your flagship umbrella must include at least two schools teaching grade levels which your school does not (unless your school complex teaches a number of grade levels) so that you will be distributing books to libraries serving grades 3-12. Your flagship umbrella must also include at least two additional schools educating populations of children that are from a different ethnic, religious, or language sector than your own.

5. Participate in the B4I school project to share ideas with other teachers and students about EFL learning and the use of authentic material. This also involves bringing school children into participation – they improve their English communication by actually writing to children abroad about favorite books, reading, and ways to effectively learn language. While schools in the flagship umbrella may or may not have internet, we request that the flagship school itself have internet access for its students.

6. Ensure that all donations become the property of school libraries and never the personal property of teachers or students.

If you are interested, please, write to me (Jade Bar-Shalom) at the following address: b4i2002@hotmail.com. You are also invited to look through the B4I website, located at: http://www.edu-negev.gov.il/bs/b4i.

Additionally, if you have friends, family or communities abroad that you think might be willing to help, please invite them to see the site and ask them to write to Rena Cohen at the Israel Action Committee address – israelactionmdsc@hotmail.com – so that they can be instructed on how to run a bookdrive and be matched up with a flagship community here in Israel.

Best regards to all. And to all of you dear educators who are running this project at your local level as flagship organizers or project members under flagship umbrellas – congratulations and "kol hakavod"!

Jade Bar-Shalom, a doctoral candidate and teacher in the English Department at the University of Haifa, is currently writing her doctoral dissertation on the body as depicted in 21st century feminist literature. Jade has spoken at ETAI and ACT on didactics that support language learning for all students in heterogeneous classes, expressly including pupils with dyslexia and mild to moderate hearing loss.

TEACHING ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST (*SHOAH*) HERE AND NOW: THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES, YAD VASHEM, JERUSALEM

By Richelle Budd Caplan

Introduction

Yad Vashem, located on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, was established by an act of the Israeli parliament in 1953. As the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority of the State of Israel, the central task of Yad Vashem is to gather material about the Jewish victims who were murdered because they were Jewish and to perpetuate their names and those of their communities, organizations, and institutions which were destroyed. In addition to documenting and commemorating the Holocaust, Yad Vashem also places a very strong emphasis on organizing educational programming and sponsoring academic research. Yad Vashem has recently been awarded the prestigious Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement – A Unique Contribution to Society and to the State. The declaration was made by Minister of Education, Limor Livnat stating that on the eve of its 50th year, Yad Vashem "represents a symbol and a model of the unity of the Jewish people…It attracts all sections of the population and serves as a source of identification for individuals in Israel and worldwide."

In marking 50 years since its founding, Yad Vashem has decided to significantly expand its educational activities. In order to remain the central source for Holocaust remembrance and education in the next century and ensure Holocaust remembrance for future generations, Yad Vashem is placing primary emphasis on Holocaust studies for educators, students, soldiers, and youth in Israel and abroad. One of its goals is to ensure that every student in Israel participate in a full day seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem.

The Holocaust, an unprecedented event, has fundamentally challenged the foundations upon which human civilization rests. It has forced us to reflect upon our most basic assumptions about the nature of humankind and of society, of the modern state, and of our responsibilities as citizens of the world to speak up and act to stop the unjust suffering of innocent people everywhere. Clearly, the Holocaust serves as a universal warning and places a heavy responsibility on us to teach it.

The International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem

The staff of the International School for Holocaust Studies, currently over one hundred people, is firmly committed to Holocaust education. We believe that it is our mission to enrich the knowledge of educators from around the world as well as to provide them with pedagogical guidelines and age-appropriate tools regarding how to teach this difficult subject matter.

The International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem has worked with thousands of teachers from all over the world over the last decade – both in Israel and abroad. Over the years we have recognized the vital importance of teacher education and have channeled huge efforts in this direction. It appears clearer than ever before that there is a general consensus about the need for Holocaust education, not only basic facts about the event but rather a deeper understanding of specifics. Overall, pupils' knowledge of the Holocaust is also very shallow. In order for children to delve into the study of the Holocaust, their teachers must first learn more about the subject. Our mission must be to better educate our teachers by providing them with more study seminars and in-service training courses that include both factual knowledge and pedagogical guidelines on how to teach this subject in the classroom.

Educational Philosophy

Yad Vashem educational materials (books, timelines, kits, maps, poster sets, multimedia and videos) concentrate on life before, during and after the Holocaust, as well as on the moral dilemmas people were forced to confront on a daily basis. Jews were part of modern civilization, and educators should not begin their lessons on the Holocaust with the destruction of the Jewish people, but rather with a detailed picture of European Jewish life and culture between the world wars. After all, how can students learn about the destruction of communities without ever knowing about the vibrant and rich cultural traditions of the Jews who lived there? A study of Jewish life should not be restricted to East European countries, and must include how people lived throughout Europe.

Clearly, Holocaust education must be based on historical accuracy. Therefore, we do not only concentrate on the Nazi extermination process, but rather on personal stories that encourage students to empathize with the victims. The perpetrators took away the victims' homes, belongings, clothes – and most importantly – their human identities. Nazi Germany sought to dehumanize Jews by reducing them to yellow patches, tattooed numbers and mass graves.

In recent years, the staff of the International School for Holocaust Studies has placed a greater emphasis on the everyday life of the victims, and their struggle to survive under insurmountable conditions. When studying this subject, Jewish students should grapple with some of the following questions: How did Jews cope with Nazi anti-Jewish decrees? What ethical choices did they make on a daily basis? How did they perceive their fate?

An in-depth inquiry about the identities of the victims should not be limited to their pre-war lives and Holocaust experiences. We also need to examine the post-war journeys of the survivors – their return to life. For example, what dilemmas did the survivors confront? How did they deal with issues of revenge? What kind of difficulties did they endure? How did they rebuild their lives in the dark shadow of the Holocaust?

Addressing complex questions vis-à-vis the perpetrators and bystanders are extremely difficult tasks for educators. Students must try and comprehend that there are no easy answers to questions regarding how it was humanly possible to commit acts of brutality and be indifferent to suffering of such mass proportions. Wrestling with questions such as why members of the German armed forces murdered Jews, or why people who lived next to concentration camps in the Reich could claim that they did not know what was happening in their midst, is part of the study of the Holocaust. We teach dilemmas and encourage students to exercise their critical thinking skills – and not arrive at simplistic conclusions.

In addition, we must also focus on the choices of moral goodness that a small minority of people made in the shadow of darkness. As of January 1, 2003, 19,706 Righteous among the Nations have been recognized by Yad Vashem. The stories of these persons, who endangered their lives to carry out acts of kindness during the Holocaust, need to be told, and, as educators, we need to instill the values of caring and responsibility in our students as well as highlight their legacy of humanity.

We have also determined that teaching the Holocaust need not be the exclusive domain of history teachers. Holocaust education with an interdisciplinary approach – through art, music, literature, theology, drama and science – allows students to gain a broader understanding about this complex subject matter.

We believe that it is important to begin teaching the Holocaust from a young age in an age-appropriate manner. In today's world, children at an early age develop an awareness of the Holocaust. In Israel, in particular, children are exposed to the two-minute siren from a very young age, become curious about what happened during the *Shoah* and begin to ask questions. However, the information they receive about the Holocaust usually comes from sources (older siblings, media) that are far beyond their emotional and intellectual level. Some children choose not to approach adults about this subject, and those who turn to adults for more information sometimes do not receive direct or relevant answers to their questions. Many educators have admitted that they find it easier to evade the children's questions about this "taboo" topic than to present the story of the Holocaust in a sensitive manner and on an age-appropriate level. On the basis of our experience, we believe that in order to prevent children from being overwhelmed by information that is beyond their emotional and scholastic level, they need to learn about the *Shoah* in stages.

Clearly, the Holocaust raises a number of universal, as well as particular, educational issues. After learning about how Jews lived before the war, how their lives changed under Nazi rule, and how those who survived regained their will to live again, pupils will better comprehend the meaning of tradition, friendship and responsibility as well as the dangers of ideological hatred – only some of the universal lessons of the Holocaust.

For more information about teacher-training programs on the *Shoah* in English, educational materials in various languages, guidelines for Holocaust remembrance ceremonies and scheduling school visits to Yad Vashem, please visit www.yadvashem.org or contact tel.(02) 644-3622 or international.school@yadvashem.org.il

Richelle is director of the Asper International Holocaust Studies Program, International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

REPORTING ON COMMUNITY SERVICE: A PROJECT FOR GRADE 10

By Jack Pillemer

Sometimes one just gets a class that one likes to teach from the word go. That happened to me this year with a Grade 10 class at Boyar High School in Jerusalem. I wanted to get them involved in a demanding project and I decided to focus on an area of their lives that is important to me and, hopefully, important to them.

In essence, the project requires the pupils to reflect on their community service activities and report back in English in a number of ways. The project is done entirely during school time and takes a minimum of two full weeks.

- In the process students work individually or in groups.
- They prepare brief structured PowerPoint presentations (or posters).

Slide I	Description of the activity	Slide IV	The kind of person best suited for this type of activity
Slide II	The benefits - for the recipients (or community) and/or for the volunteer	Slide V	Other (Pupil has free choice)
Slide III	The difficulties		

- They decide on the criteria by which the PowerPoint (or poster) presentations should be assessed and use these criteria as a checklist for their own work. See Appendix I.
- They present orally in front of an audience using PowerPoint (or posters) as visual support.
- They decide on the criteria by which the oral presentations should be assessed and use these criteria as a checklist for their own oral preparation. See Appendix II
- They assess each others' presentations (optional)
- They write a full written report to the School Community Service Coordinator using the vocabulary and ideas they have already internalized from the previous activities. (This was the writing component of their regular test) See Appendix III
- They are congratulated on their contribution to the community and on their success in the project.
- They reflect in writing on their Community Service in particular and on Project Work and on Learning English.

The project is based on the requirements of the English Curriculum, and a much more detailed description can be found on the PIE site under Sample Projects http://space.ort.org.il/pie/.

Appendix I: Checklist for PowerPoint (or Poster) Presentations

The slides in this PowerPoint presentation:	Assessment*
❑ have no spelling mistakes	1 2 3 4 5
❑ have no grammar mistakes	1 2 3 4 5
❑ are organized in logical order according to the subject	1 2 3 4 5
❑ have short sentences or phrases	1 2 3 4 5
❑ have the bullets on the correct side	1 2 3 4 5
❑ have colors and font size that make the slides easy to read from a distance	1 2 3 4 5
❑ are illustrated according to the subject	1 2 3 4 5
❑ present each subtopic clearly	1 2 3 4 5
❑ do not distract the audience	1 2 3 4 5
❑ generally give a good impression	1 2 3 4 5

* 5 = excellent; 4 = good; 3= satisfactory 2= weak; 1= very weak Grade out of 50 points = ____

Appendix II: Checklist for Oral Presentation

The speaker, when giving his / her oral presentation:	Assessment*
❑ spoke loudly and confidently	1 2 3 4 5
❑ pronounced the words clearly	1 2 3 4 5
❑ was fluent and did not hesitate a lot	1 2 3 4 5
❑ made sense (I could understand the topic)	1 2 3 4 5
❑ gave the impression that he/she was prepared	1 2 3 4 5
❑ did not make lots of grammatical mistakes	1 2 3 4 5
❑ spoke without reading from notes	1 2 3 4 5
❑ kept my interest	1 2 3 4 5
❑ used the PowerPoint slides	1 2 3 4 5
❑ generally made a good impression	1 2 3 4 5

* 5 = excellent; 4 = good; 3= satisfactory 2= weak; 1= very weak Grade out of 50 points = ____

Final grade out of 100: PowerPoint + Oral Presentation = ____

Appendix III: Volunteer work - Written report

You are expected to volunteer to help the community. Half a year has passed since you started this work. The time has come to write to the coordinator of the project and report back.

Write 120-150 words. The points below will help you to organize your report.

- Describe the community service you have chosen to do and the work that you have done until now.
- Describe the benefits (for you or for others).
- Mention the problems/thoughts you have.
- Make suggestions for the rest of the year (or for those who will do the work next year).

To: _____

From: _____ Date: _____

Subject: Community Service Mid -Year Report

_____

_____

Jack - jackpil@barak-online.net - teaches at Boyar School, Jerusalem. Another project which he has conducted in the past and is presently researching is the "Lyrics Project", which can be found at www.geocities.com/jackpillemer. If you have used the project, Jack would appreciate it if you could contact him.

MAKING A LONG STORY SHORT

By Nava Horovitz

Editor's Note: Nava was chairperson of ETAI between 1995-2002. We highly recommend you read about her eventful, interesting and varied life.

1964 was an eventful year for me for three particular reasons: I came on *Aliyah* in February, began my studies at Tel Aviv University in October, and in December, I met my husband-to-be.

At that time, I had no idea what I wanted to do professionally – teaching English wasn't even on the horizon. At least I wasn't aware of it. However, because I did not know much Hebrew (some from my religious background, the rest from a two-month Ulpan) and I wanted to study at the university, English Literature was an obvious choice for a major, with General History as a minor. So I became a student at Tel Aviv University.

By May 1965, I was engaged and, as luck would have it, my fiance was an English teacher at "Kugel" High School in Holon. By the time we were married, in August 1965, I had a job teaching English with him at the same school.

Those were the days when "anyone" could teach English. I had no idea how to teach, and the concept of "grammar" was the biggest unknown for me as a native speaker. Nevertheless, I remember my time at 'Kugel' as a positive experience and was quite sad to have to leave at the Passover vacation because I could no longer juggle running a home (in central Tel Aviv), studying full time (in Ramat Aviv), teaching (in Holon) and my first pregnancy. So I left the classroom for the next three years.

During that time, I concentrated on my baby boy and my studies, dropping History after two years and, in 1966, joining the first English Linguistics department in Israel with Robert Lees, Ruth Berman, Elite Olshtain and many other wonderful people. The end of that academic year was somewhat disrupted by the Six Day War, but by then I knew I had found my niche – I really wanted to become an English teacher.

In the academic/school year of 1968-69, I got my first real teaching job as a trained teacher at ORT Ramat-Gan and had the amazing good fortune to have Dr Esther Lucas as my teacher-trainer at Tel Aviv University. To paraphrase Wordsworth: "*A teacher could not but be good in such learned company.*"

That was yet again a most fulfilling year in which I received my B.A. and a Diploma of Education, and gave birth to my second son in July.

I learnt a lot from teaching in a vocational school in those days, but in particular, I discovered that the pupils were most interested in learning the English related to their future profession – in this case, draftsmanship, office work and fashion. Of course, there were no "suitable" textbooks available, so I started writing my own rather "primitive" booklets consisting mainly of vocabulary lists, pictures and short texts. Little did I know then, that this was actually the beginning of my later ventures as a textbook writer.

I spent the years 1972-75 with my family in Wellington, New Zealand (my birthplace) working for the Jewish Community and, for a change, I taught Hebrew and Jewish Studies to five and six year olds.

In October 1975, we returned to Israel and I went back to teaching at a vocational high school in Ramat Gan, specializing in the secretarial trend. Using my old materials and some new ones, I succeeded in keeping some "difficult" students in their seats.

My long awaited daughter, Sara, arrived in 1976 and I took a year off teaching to look after her.

The inspector for English in our area in those days was Hazel (Aliza) Camron – a wonderfully supportive, knowledgeable and dedicated colleague. She was kind enough to recommend me to the Chief Inspector, Raphael Gefen, who, as part of Ministry policy, was interested in raising the level of English for Specific Purposes among students in vocational high schools. He was interested in publishing appropriate materials for these students who took "*Gemer*" examinations with special sections related to their particular trend.

Through this project, I was teamed up with Talia Glass, who had also written her own materials for the secretarial trend. Together we produced a series of ten booklets called "Office Situations". We spent many wonderful hours planning and writing these booklets, in addition to the usual frustrations of the publishing process. These materials were aimed at providing students with basic professional vocabulary, background information about office procedures as well as practical

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aspects such as answering the telephone and letter writing. Our educational aim was particularly important. Because the tasks were short and the booklets only about 20-25 pages each, the students could gain a tremendous sense of achievement. Over the years, Talia and I fought several attempts to reform the booklets into one book because we knew from experience the importance of building self-esteem through a system marked by frequent and successful completion of short tasks.

In 1980-81, I participated in and completed the first in-service training course for English coordinators at Tel Aviv University under the guidance of Adeerah Myers and the late Ruth Baratz. This was a truly enlightening experience, which served me well in the years that followed.

After ten years in total of teaching English in vocational schools, I joined the teaching staff at "Ohel Shem" High School in Ramat Gan and soon felt that it was also time to move on academically. I tested the water at Bar Ilan University by attending one class as an auditor and quickly discovered that my brain was still alive and working reasonably well.

While studying for my MA in Applied Linguistics at Bar Ilan, I was invited to teach proficiency in the English Department. There I discovered, yet again, the importance of supportive staff relations. In regular meetings with the veterans, Belle Friedman, Valerie Whiteson and the rest of the staff, we developed techniques, materials and testing procedures for improving the students' proficiency in English.

Having always been a team person and having had so many positive experiences with colleagues, I felt I was well equipped to do the job when I was offered and accepted the position of coordinator at "Ohel Shem". In this role, I was able to put into practice my belief that pupils should take more responsibility for their learning. This was, of course, long before the time of projects and task-based syllabi and I felt that pupils were being spoon-fed the "*bagrut* material". To counteract this tendency, I set up a self-study center in the school library. There, students could work on strengthening their weaknesses in cloze, rewrites, using books with answer keys, and even listening comprehension, in one of the six booths available. In order to lighten the load for the English staff, I set up a resource center with reference books and multiple copies of worksheets, activities and sample tests. This center exemplified for the staff the importance of sharing and cooperation.

I must mention that all this happened long before easy access to computer sites or even cheap photocopying facilities.

By this time, I had a new co-author, my friend and colleague Valerie Whiteson, with whom I wrote three course books over a twelve-year period. During this time I also wrote a few books on my own.

Now that I am putting all this down on paper, I realize that I must have been extremely busy, but I wasn't aware of it at the time.

During these years, 1985-1995, I became an active member of the National Executive Committee of ETAI, co-convening the winter conferences at Bar Ilan University and other venues, together with Judy Segal and Tsafi Ben Shachar.

In 1991, I left Bar Ilan University to work at Talpiot College in Tel Aviv. There I faced new challenges as Head of the EAP Department and, together with Elaine Hoter, as Head of the English Department, played a small but significant role in helping the college gain academic recognition.

Through my work at Talpiot, I have been given the opportunity to convey some important messages to the student teachers who are by now in the field and to the teachers of the future. I have encouraged them to be open to change, to go the extra mile and to continue to develop professionally.

Once again, I am fortunate to be working with wonderful colleagues and since I became coordinator of both English departments, cooperative working relations and teamwork are more important than ever.

From 1995 – 2002, I was privileged to act as Chair of ETAI and in this capacity, I met and worked with people in the field at many levels. The time spent in this role (and believe me it was a lot of time) was very rewarding, giving me an opportunity to contribute to the field of teaching English in Israel. New members seeking professional development, increased attendance at conferences at better venues and a wider range of topics presented are but a few examples of the progress made in recent years.

As I continue to "work" for ETAI, I have agreed to convene the International Conference in 2004 to celebrate the 25th Jubilee of the association. The title chosen for the conference is "Reaching Greater Heights in Language Teaching" and I hope that this will set the tone for the work of ETAI for the next 25 years.

At Talpiot College, I am constantly looking for ways to expand the activities of the English Department so it seems that my work is never done.

Although my wheels turn more slowly than they used to, they are still driving me forward – who knows to what?

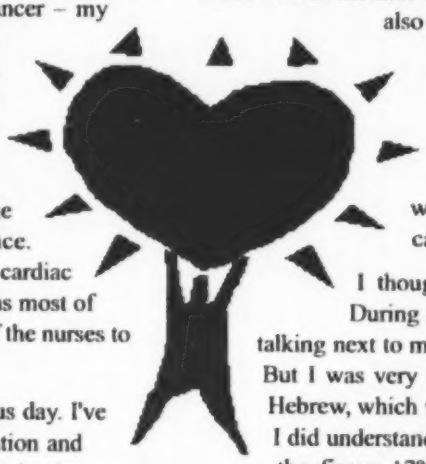
THE HEART THAT LIVES ON

By Susan Baram

Editor's Note: We want to thank Susan for agreeing to share this amazing story with us.

I had a heart transplant seventeen months ago. I want to tell you my story.

Seven years ago I was an English teacher in Haifa. I awoke early Wednesday, February 14, 1996. This is a day I will never forget, but do not remember much about. I went to shower in order to get ready for school. No one else was in the house. I remember turning on the water and as I stepped into the shower something happened. I didn't feel pain but rather the inability to breathe. I felt like something had grabbed me and knocked all the wind out of my body. I thought I was having an attack of lung cancer – my heart never entered my mind. I had no pain in my chest, no pain in my arm and no history of heart problems. I had been a heavy smoker and I really only thought about lung cancer.



For reasons that I can't understand, I had the presence of mind to call an ambulance. Apparently I arrived at the hospital in cardiac shock. I don't remember – I was unconscious most of the time. Somehow, I managed to get one of the nurses to help locate my son Amir.

I don't remember much else of that infamous day. I've been told that I went for a heart catheterization and eventually to open heart surgery. I survived, although it was touch and go for many days. I can only remember occasionally hearing doctors speak, seeing Amir's and doctors' faces – more like a photograph than a person, becoming semi-hysterical about red flying insects (I thought they were outside an imaginary window), being convinced that Carmel Hospital was filled with red, blue and green bugs, and most of the week fighting with my son about the day of the week – I was sure every day was Thursday. He told me later that I was rather obnoxious. He was frightened about my condition and I was busy arguing about the day of the week!

I awoke after a long week in intensive care to find myself in a small private room. It was Tuesday and I had lost a week. It is very unusual to have a private room in Israel but I didn't think about that. Amir told me my mother and Orli, my daughter, were coming that afternoon. Actually, they had arrived in Israel from the US on Saturday but the doctors were afraid that I might have gotten excited or frightened. I was just pleased to see them.

Wednesday morning I experienced a tingling and numbness in my left leg. I mentioned it to the nurse who mentioned it to the doctor and within a few minutes I was being prepared for surgery again – I had thrown a blood clot. I survived that surgery.

After about a week, I was moved from the private room in cardiac surgery down the hall to a four-bed ward in cardiology. In cardiology the patient is hooked up to a monitor. The monitor can be watched next to the bed and also at the nurses' station. However, the monitor for my bed was new and not hooked up to the nurses' station. So, I didn't put on the electrodes. I sent my daughter back to New York where she was studying. All went well for the first two weeks in cardiology.

I thought I was okay and getting better. During all this time I had heard the doctors talking next to my bed as they made medical rounds. But I was very sick and the doctors were speaking Hebrew, which was hard for me to understand. What I did understand and heard over and over again was the figure 17%. I decided that this meant I had damaged 17% of my heart. About a year later, someone asked me, "Didn't you realize how much damage you had done?" Only 17% of my heart function had been left! Not understanding this nor wanting to believe it is one of the things that kept me going.

The woman in the next bed was sent home around 1 p.m. on a Wednesday. At 1:30 the nurses moved my bed to her place and hooked me up to her monitor. At 2:30 I had my first cardiac arrest. I survived it! If my neighbor hadn't gone home, if the nurses hadn't moved my bed and hooked me up to the other monitor, if someone hadn't been alert as to my condition, I wouldn't have survived.

I continued to have many cardiac arrests a day and the doctors and nurses continued to try to save me. I gave them many a sleepless night. I remember my son coming into intensive care several times in the middle of the night. He'd bring a yogurt and feed me. What I didn't know was that he was also sleeping at the hospital.

I was put on an aorta balloon pump, my daughter was told to come back immediately and I knew nothing about what was going on. I remember seeing a lot of doctors around my bed, seeing one of the surgeons wearing shorts because he had been playing basketball, and hearing some discussions and arguments but not understanding. One of my sisters came from Florida but when she came into the room, I had another cardiac arrest. My daughter arrived but didn't come into intensive care for fear of upsetting me. I couldn't move my right leg because of the pump, but apparently it stopped the cardiac arrests.

The doctors in Carmel felt they couldn't do anything more to save me. I was told on Monday that I was going to Belgium for a heart transplant on Tuesday. I knew what a heart transplant was but I didn't know exactly where Belgium was and I didn't know what was going on. I was too sick at that point to really understand anything. I didn't stop to wonder about anything – like how I was getting to Belgium, who was going, who was packing and what would happen in Belgium. However, I continued to give orders from my bed to everyone!

I just remember that my sister and mother left on Monday and Orli and Amir, my children, left Tuesday morning at around noon. I didn't leave until about 3 p.m. I was terribly frightened during those few hours that I was alone. The doctors, surgeons and nurses all came to my bed to say goodbye. I remember a friend coming to sit with me before I left. He gave me a 20 shekel note and told me to bring it back from Belgium and give it to charity. This 20 shekel was very important to me and always stayed next to my bed in Belgium. When I returned I gave money to charity. Seven years later, the same 20 shekel note is next to my bed for good luck.

I was taken to the Haifa airport in an ambulance with a lot of equipment. We were met at the airport with a private flying ambulance from Germany. This flying ambulance and all medical treatment was arranged and paid for by *Kupat Holim Maccabi*. As I was being transferred into the airplane, Dr. Flugelman, from cardiology at Carmel, said to me, "You are taking property of Carmel Hospital with you. Bring it back." I asked him what he was talking about and he told me that the hospital gown and the two sheets belonged to Carmel Hospital. Upon arriving in the hospital in Belgium, I was moved to their bed. I immediately asked them to fold the sheets and gown and give them to me. When I returned to Israel, the first thing I did was call Dr. Flugelman and arrange to meet him the next day. I brought a plastic bag and gave it to him. When he asked what was in the bag, I told him that it was "property of Carmel Hospital". He told me that he hadn't been serious about returning the sheets, and I told him I had taken him very seriously!

My family had assumed that we would arrive in Belgium and I would immediately get a heart transplant. But hearts are not given away so easily – they are only given to people who are otherwise healthy, both physically and mentally. The patient must go through a complete medical evaluation. One of the tests was to see the level of antibodies in my blood. Antibodies are the mechanism which the body uses to reject foreign objects – such as a heart from someone else. I had a very high level of antibodies and, therefore, wasn't eligible for a transplant. Instead, the doctors in Belgium performed very complicated surgery, which had not been carried out in Israel. This surgery saved my life and gave me several good years. I also had a defibrillator implanted in me to shock me if I ever had another cardiac arrest. I had a few other operations.

I slowly began to recover. I had to learn how to walk again. I was very surprised that I couldn't walk at all the first time I tried, but after six months in bed I wasn't able to. Everything came slowly. My children and mother gave me the strength to get better. I was finally released from hospital and stayed for another few months in an apartment near the hospital. I continued to improve, and finally came back to Israel.

After two years of fully enjoying life here, teaching adults rather than in the school system, my doctor decided that I had to have a transplant. I was finally sent by Kupat Holim Maccabi to Philadelphia for another evaluation. While I was undergoing the evaluation, I was told that if I didn't have a caretaker I wouldn't be considered for a transplant. They told me that hearts were too dear and hard to get to waste one on someone who wasn't able to take care of him/herself. My son Amir, who had accompanied me to Philadelphia on a ten-day roundtrip ticket, announced that he would stay with me in the US. From Philadelphia I was sent to the Texas Heart Institute at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital in Houston, Texas. I waited for 19 months in Houston. My antibody level remained very high, so I underwent chemotherapy and blood exchange for many months and agreed to any and all experimental treatments in order to get my transplant.

Finally, one Tuesday, I was feeling very low and discouraged. I went to see my doctors at about six in the evening and we spoke. They said that they had tried everything they knew to bring my antibody level down and they had failed. They had been trying to match a heart for me for 19 months and had failed. They suggested that I go to another transplant center. I said no. One of the doctors gave me a pill for anxiety. I said I didn't need it.

The next morning, Wednesday, November 14, 2001, at 8 am, I got a phone call from my doctor. I couldn't understand why she was calling – I immediate thought that she was calling to check if I had taken the pill for anxiety. I also had an infection and wondered whether she was calling to ask about it. She said, "Susan, there is a heart for you and it looks like a perfect match." I don't remember what I answered her. I remember hanging up the phone and going into my children's bedroom and saying, "There's a heart!" We danced, hugged, cried, laughed and then got a phone call from the heart transplant coordinator. "How long will it take you to get to the hospital?" she asked. As unbelievable as it may seem, after waiting six years for a heart transplant, the first thing that went through my mind was that I needed to wash my hair. I didn't say this to the coordinator but I said that it would take 30 minutes. She told us to get there in 15!

I was extremely frightened while we were waiting in the holding area outside the operating room. I had asked my children to contact a rabbi at the local synagogue. Rabbi Rosen came and prayed for me. I said goodbye to my children because I was so frightened. My daughter said to me, "Mom, it's a piece of cake. After everything that you have been through, this surgery is nothing." Five hours later I was out of surgery. Seventeen months later I am living a very active life.

While I was waiting in the holding area, I was told that the donor was a 19-year-old black American male. That was the only information I was given about him. This type of information is kept secret in America unless both sides want to meet. I wrote a thank you letter to my unknown donor family telling about myself. At first I didn't hear from them and was convinced that I wouldn't. However, four months later I received an e-mail from the donor family that read: "My name is Veronica Glenn. I am the mother of Anthony. Anthony was the donor whose heart you now have. I am so happy to know our decision to give life has allowed your life to go on. Anthony had one sister who is 10 years old, two brothers age 14 and 19 and my husband. I would like very much to meet you. When I think about where you live, I feel my son is everywhere." I look forward to meeting the Glenn family soon.

What emotions haven't I gone through? Fear. Hope. Joy. Anger. Desperation. Love. Happiness. Patience. Impatience. Loneliness. Abandonment. I've been so frightened for so long since the heart attack. That fear never really leaves you. You have been so close to death that you live with a fear all the time of the next time, the next few minutes, the next morning, the next surgery, the transplant and surviving that. Surviving anything and everything. I have been afraid to go to sleep at night. And yet, the most important, most vital feeling is hope and love. I wouldn't have survived without my own inner strength and optimism. And I wouldn't have survived without the love and belief in my survival of my children, family and friends.

What have I done with this story?

I had decided while I was waiting in Houston that if I survived and got a transplant, I would bring the issue of organ donor awareness and transplants to Israel. I began to learn as much as possible about the subject. I decided that my audience would be 12th grade students. I would speak in English. I found a lot of material about the subject and attended a course about how to be a volunteer for Ady – the transplant donor card organization. I distributed material to many schools in the Haifa area. I began going to schools and classes to speak for two lessons. I tell my story, answer questions and then explain many facts about organ donation, signing an Ady card and what it means, and about the Jewish religion's approval of organ donation. The pupils have been fascinated. Many have begun to think about the subject of organ donation. I plan to continue next year again with 12th grade classes.

This is an excellent subject for projects. It could be done at all levels – junior high and senior high school. Depending on the level, students could do projects on various aspects of organ transplants: e.g., Ady, religious and ethical viewpoints, international networking, dangers (e.g., people donating good organs for money), the Israeli and international scenes, the medical process, the question of clinical death, families of donors and recipients, etc. Pupils could learn how they themselves could be involved in volunteering and in disseminating information.

Project activities could include gathering and processing of information from various sources, interviewing people involved in the medical and personal aspects of transplants, purposeful social interaction, debating, and engaging in various genres of writing. Not only is the subject extremely interesting, but it is authentic, meaningful, and connected to real life in the broadest possible sense of the word.

If you would like to contact Susan about receiving more information about transplants, she may be reached at susanbar@netvision.net.il.

Editors' Note: A great resource easily accessible on the Internet consists of academic articles on an array of subjects pertaining to teaching. The trouble is that the content is not always reliable; what is needed alongside the articles is a critical review. In this edition of "Netsurfing" – our new Internet column – two teachers from Holon have reviewed articles about teaching songs in class. (By the way, if you would like to take over responsibility for collecting material for this column, please get in touch with us).

Rich, S. Teaching with pop songs. *Developing Teachers*

Reviewed by Laura Shashua

Address http://www.developingteachers.com/articles_tchtraining/popsongs1_sarn.htm Go Links

This article is a godsend! In it, Rich discusses the many ways songs can be used in the classroom and provides a wide variety of appendices for additional reference.

Songs are useful in the general classroom context because of their ability to "speak" directly to the listener; in addition the music helps the learner memorize the song more easily. They create an enjoyable atmosphere, can be addressed in the same way as any other text, and make an excellent supplement to course material. In an L2 context, they can be used for teaching grammar, conversation and pronunciation and can introduce aspects of the culture of the target language.

Despite the advantages of using song, Rich is not without a few words of warning. He reminds us that the teacher should be careful not to choose material that might offend (it might be sexist, racist or violent). If the students are allowed to supply the music, it should cater to all tastes; otherwise the exercise is bound to fail.

Rich then goes on to provide a huge list of activities, which would take far too long to enumerate here. Gap-fill activities, he says, should be used sparingly, since they only require listening for the odd word, and are therefore inauthentic. Among other ideas, Rich lists activities with songs as a theme (ice-breakers, stories, questionnaires and surveys), and activities that require the learner to listen out for specific details. Other tasks might include dictogloss, rewriting, dialogues and roleplays. Some songs might be used to trigger discussions.

While reading this, I got the impression that Rich had been reading the Ministry's New Curriculum. There are enough activities to answer the demands of every benchmark for the domain of appreciation of literature and culture, while many others would more than adequately serve as appropriate material for the domain of social interaction. According to Rich, just one song could then provide a stimulus for the following (all the ideas in parentheses are his suggestions):

1. Access to information (reading and listening, inferring explicit and implicit information, answering questions)
2. Social interaction (surveys, questionnaires, quizzes, competitions, roleplays, simulation games)
3. Appreciation of literature and culture (research the background of the artist/song)
4. Appreciation of language (tenses, modality, slang, idioms)

On a personal note, it's a shame that I hadn't had access to this article earlier. I introduced the blues into my classroom a few months ago, and now, after reading "Teaching with Pop Songs", I realize that could have expanded the lesson into a thrilling experience for my students, many of whom had never heard of the genre before.

This article has become my bible for the teaching of song in the EFL classroom. In short, highly recommended.

Rating: ☆☆☆

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Moi, C. F. (1994). Rock poetry: The literature our students listen to.
The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning and Teaching, 2:
Reviewed by Laura Shashua

Address **http://www.njcu.edu/cill/journal-index.html** Go Links

Anyone who works in High School cannot fail to miss the importance rock music has in teenagers' lives: they scrawl the names of their favourite groups on the desks, hum the songs while you are teaching and dress like their idols. In this erudite and theoretical, if not somewhat pretentious article, Moi sees room for rock lyrics alongside standard "school literature", noting its relevance to students' lives, the fact that it acts as a bridge to "serious" literature and that it is an easy source of authentic material.

She then divides her article into two sections: literature in rock and rock as literature. The "literature in rock" section provides an interesting background to the influence of "real" literature on rock music; in other words, she refers to the crossover between standard literature of the likes of Orwell and Bronte to the realms of the rock song. Moi then traces two thematic lines of rock lyrics: that of protest and denunciation, and the mystical and hallucinogenic.

The section on rock as literature is more problematic. It seems to me that Moi is saying two contradictory things. On the one hand, she asserts that the roots of modern rock are based on the primal scream – the need for meaningless words to symbolize the rebellion of youth. To this end she draws analogies from Bill Haley and the Beatles. The very fact that not even native speakers can understand words without the liner notes of the CD proves that rock is an awakening of sound, allowing the singers and listeners to "identify themselves as members of a community".

On the other hand, Moi admits that rock lyrics in class can then "prove to be a magnificent opportunity to exchange views...and see the world from somebody else's perspective". Moi's assertion therefore raises a question that she herself does not answer: if rock is seen only as a primal scream, can it be taught, and especially within the realms of an EFL class?

I would categorically say "yes". If students are to be aware of a social and cultural framework, or discuss themes and conflicts, then it is that very primal scream that is the basis of cultural investigation. Any rock song can be brought to class, whether it be by Eminem, Led Zeppelin or Elvis Presley. Lennon's "I am the Walrus" is meaningless, but its richness of vocabulary makes it absolute poetry. Students could interact in discussing what it means, express opinions and even make up their own words. Why then, shouldn't it be taught? Because it means nothing? The only obstacle I can see to successful teaching is whether all the class are ready to accept the various genres of rock. It is usually better to take the middle road and use material that everyone will like.

If the reader is looking for suggestions as to how to teach rock literature, then this is not the place to find them. As a final word, however, Moi reminds us that teaching and learning are a symbiotic process, rather like the interdependency between singer and listener. This is perhaps the most important point to come out of this article. As a theoretical opinion, it is fine, but to my mind, there are too many other questions that remain unanswered.

Rating: ☆

Internet

Schoepp, Kevin. Reasons for Using Songs in the ESL/EFL Classroom.
The Internet TESL Journal.
Reviewed by Sigal Dricker-Levi

Address http://iteslj.org/Articles/Schoepp-Songs.html Go Links

Everyone sings – in the shower, at bars, for religious services and holidays – and if they don't sing, they certainly listen to songs.

Schoepp writes: "Songs have become an integral part of our language experience, and if used in coordination with a language lesson they can be of great value." He mentions that there are two steps in developing a theoretical rationale for using songs in the classroom. The first one is the listening processes and the second is the reasons for using songs.

In listening there are two processes:

The first is bottom-up processing where the listener builds up the sound into words, sentences and meaning. The second is top-down processing where the listener uses background knowledge to understand the meaning of a message.

Both processes are very important for developing listening comprehension.

According to Schoepp, there are three reasons for using songs in the classroom: affective reasons, cognitive reasons, and linguistic reasons.

Affective Reasons:

Using songs in class is consistent with Krashen's "Affective Filter Hypothesis". Song activities provide a break from classroom routine, they create an enjoyable, positive atmosphere and are non-threatening, and singing is an activity that even the weakest students will be happy to participate in. If a teacher brings a familiar song to the classroom, the students could engage in a short conversation and express their feelings about the song and about the message that the song conveys.

Cognitive Reasons:

Songs help to develop automaticity which, according to Schoepp, is the main cognitive reason for using songs in the classroom. Automaticity – or fluency – means: that a student knows what to say and can speak without pausing. Repetition is needed to achieve automatization, and a better way to elicit this than mechanical exercises is to place students where they can "use target utterance in a genuinely communicative fashion". Songs are a perfect way for doing so.

Linguistic Reasons:

Exposure to authentic English is an important factor in promoting language learning." The language of many songs is colloquial, i.e., the language of informal conversation.". By teaching the students songs, we can prepare them for the language as it is used in real life.

Schoepp refers to a number of different writers who show us that songs can develop all four language skills: writing, reading, listening, and speaking. Ways of using songs include: presenting a topic; stimulating discussion; encouraging creativity and use of imagination; showing how word order, sound and writing systems in English are organized and how these elements compare with their mother tongue; describing main characters, settings and events in literary texts; and more. All four domains of our Curriculum are represented.

Altogether, this article explains very clearly why we should use songs in the classroom. However, I would have liked to find more examples of songs for each reasons mentioned above.

Rating: ☆☆

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Dornbaum, K. Using Songs as instructional materials in beginning level classes. Reprinted from The SIGnal (newsletter for the K-12 interest group of NYSTESL).

Reviewed by Sigal Dricker-Levi

Address http://members.aol.com/jakajk/usemus.html#Using%20Songs Go Links

Using songs as primary text is a helpful tool for students to learn English. A variety of musical styles and the cultures conveyed in songs will enrich any class. The students' reading and writing skills will improve, their vocabulary will increase, they will have a better ear for English, and they'll enjoy learning in this way.

Dornbaum suggests that teachers prepare a master tape and copies for each student. This way, all the students will have access to the songs all the time, they can listen to the songs over and over, and by the time the teacher presents a song, the students will already have heard it many times. "They will memorize the language and gain a great deal of communicative competence."

When recording songs, a few factors should be take into consideration: whether the lyrics make sense, whether the song tells a story, whether it is sung clearly and whether it is sung in interwoven choruses. Dornbaum warns against recording a song that has a long instrumental section (the students will lose focus). Before presenting a song, the teacher needs to check whether the lyric sheet is the same as what is sung.

Dornbaum suggests the following way of presenting a song: first, have the students listen to the song, then ask comprehension questions [Social Interaction]. After that, play the song a few times more while the students try to fill in a gapped text. [Access to Information]. Give the students the lyrics sheet to help them correct their mistakes. Play the song again, and this time it should be sung. Singing with the tape is great pronunciation practice and develops the students' communicative competence. The teacher may then give further cloze and vocabulary exercises, and can also get the students to write dialogues and do role-playing activities.

Dornbaum mentions a few songs that teachers can use in class. "You've Got a Friend" by Carole King, for example, has been used to inspire students to write skits about friends with problems. For more songs and suggestions, you will have to read this article.

Rating: ☆☆☆

Done Internet

Both Laura and Sigal are doing inservice training at "Talpiot" Teachers' College. They are participating in a course 'The Story Behind the Song' given by Batya Lederfein. Laura – lauradan@netvision.net.il – teaches the junior-high level at Herzog Junior High School, Holon and Sigal – sigaldl@wall.co.il – teaches grades 4 to 6 at Ben Gurion Primary School, Holon.

"This has been really cool! If my dot.com company hadn't bottomed out last month... I'd never have discovered the joys of substitute teaching!"

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THE VERY LAST WORD
SHATTERING THE MYTHS II

By Penny Ur

***Editors' Note:** This is the second part of the article, "Shattering the Myths", the first part of which appeared in the Spring 2003 edition (Vol.xiv, no.2) of the ETAI Forum page 62. The first four myths were entitled: "Grammar should not be taught explicitly"; "Students should not be asked to learn lists of vocabulary"; "Students should not be asked to learn by heart and 'parrot' "; and "Teachers should not tell; they should elicit".*

In my article in the previous issue of ETAI Forum, I discussed four prevalent myths in English teaching; in the present article, I'll carry on to do the same for three more. In every case I am not, actually, arguing for discarding these assumptions completely – as my rather over-dramatic title would suggest! – but rather attempting to look at them critically and sensibly, and trying to decide, in the light of research and my own professional experience and judgement, what in fact, may be rejected and what may be accepted as useful or appropriate.

In this spirit of what may be called 'critical open-mindedness' – let us proceed to the next three myths: 'Translation is to be avoided', 'Group work is a good thing to do' and 'Younger is better'.

Myth #5: Translation is to be avoided

The roots of this go back beyond the Communicative Approach. In the preceding Audio-Lingual approach (involving drills, memorization, mimicry), the use of mother-tongue, for explanation or translation, was also forbidden.

Another reason for the rejection of L1 use in general has been a reaction against its over-use in many classrooms. This over-use is partly the result of a very widely-used (to this day) grammar-translation methodology. But mainly, I feel, it is due to a preference on the part of many teachers: either they themselves are unsure of their own English, and find it safer to use mother-tongue most of the time; or they give in to student pressure ('We don't understand! Tell us in Hebrew / Arabic / Circassian / Russian … ').

In any case, wherever it came from, what we're trying to do here is decide if translation should, indeed, be avoided; and if not, then when to use it. Let's look at some of the 'pros' and 'cons'.

Some of the following arguments have been used in favour of using translation:

1. It's quick and efficient: you can often explain a word more quickly and clearly by translating than by explaining it in mother tongue.
2. Students translate anyway, even if you yourself don't.
3. It provides a feeling of comfort and security: if I know what it means in my L1, then I understand it.
4. It guarantees understanding of meaning; if students can translate, they have to understand first.
5. It enables us to use contrastive analysis to clarify linguistic points, to raise language awareness.

And here are some arguments against:

1. It stops them thinking in English
2. It takes time away from exposure to English; if we're speaking Hebrew or Arabic then they aren't 'engaging' with English.
3. Some words are untranslatable; so translation can be misleading
4. It's addictive: once you start you can't stop
5. It's not communicative: translation involves talking 'about' the language rather than actual 'using' it.
6. Translation is a special skill that not all teachers – and certainly not students – possess.

Before trying to come to a conclusion, I'd like to relate a personal anecdote.

I was in Japan last year, teaching on a summer workshop. I was also invited to join one of the other classes, and chose to join a class in Korean. The teacher was a delightful young teacher of English whose mother tongue was Korean, and whose methodology involved using only Korean throughout. Her students were, like myself, adult, intelligent (!) English teachers; their mother tongue was Japanese, but all spoke English.

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For the first few lessons, she did indeed speak only Korean, and insisted on us doing the same. We found that it was really difficult and time-wasting working out what something meant and what she wanted us to do, and there were actually instances where we wasted valuable time on wrong assumptions, until some breakdown in communication showed us we were wrong. On the fourth day we rebelled! – and insisted that she give us a quick translation, or a quick instruction in English to make sure we were on the right track whenever she introduced new vocabulary or instigated a new activity. And from then on we progressed much faster and more enjoyably.

I think this experience really clarified for me what the issue is, and brought me down firmly on the side of (admittedly limited and controlled) use of L1 for translation and explanation. It's essentially a question of a) clarity versus confusion and b) confidence and comfort versus frustration.

To go back to some of the points listed above: Translation may indeed sometimes be inaccurate or misleading; but the point is that English explanations, or pictures, or whatever, may be even more so! Using only English may be very communicative and enable lots of input, but what's the use if the students don't understand it (so it's 'input' with no 'intake') and are getting frustrated and demoralized?

What's happening? As with a lot of these myths, many teachers are carrying on doing the 'forbidden' thing, but feeling guilty about it. For example, they are writing up a translation on the board, but erasing it fast if they're afraid the coordinator or an inspector is going to come in. And I have to say that there is still a lot of over-use of mother-tongue, even when it is not strictly necessary – because it's convenient, or because of student pressure.

Very occasionally, teachers are being over-scrupulous about avoiding translation. Sometimes the result is student frustration (as in my anecdote above). More often, the teachers adopt a strategy of allowing the students to translate, but keeping their own conscience clear by not translating themselves (even if they could actually do it better!).

A sensible conclusion. My conclusion would be: Use translation if it contributes to clarity (e.g. contrastive analysis, or explaining a new word) or saves time (e.g. giving instructions quickly in L1 in order to have more time for the activity itself). Don't use it just because it's there and convenient. This means a lot of 'on your feet' decisions during a lesson as to when and how much to use it.

It's perfectly OK, in my opinion, to write up an L1 translation on the board; it's perfectly OK to ask students to learn words listed with L1 equivalents; it's perfectly OK to test comprehension by asking for translations.

But such strategies are temporary and occasional measures, not a method. If I write up a Hebrew translation on the board, I erase it fairly quickly, not because I'm afraid of someone seeing it, but because I want the students to be exposed to English words as much as possible, not to Hebrew. The translation is an interim crutch – as soon as they have understood, they don't need it any more.

Myth # 6: Group work is a good thing to do

We find everywhere an underlying message that we 'should' be asking students to do things in groups rather than independently or (heaven forbid!) in obedient response to teacher instructions. There seems to be an unwritten and unexamined assumption that group work is worth doing for its own sake. But why?

I don't know where this one came from – maybe from mainstream education? From the generally student-centred methodology advocated in teacher-training in general? From the democratic tradition, that things should be worked out through negotiation, not through imposition by an authority?

Our own experience teaches us that, yes, there are students who learn well when working with their friends. But there are others who don't, who prefer to work on their own. And a third group who like it best when they are working in direct interaction with the teacher. So from the point of view of learning styles, it would seem sensible to allow all sorts of interaction patterns in the classroom (including the unfashionable but happily unavoidable teacher 'telling') in order to cater for different learning styles.

Research: There is some research on the use of group work in language learning. A well-known study by Long and Porter (1986) indicates that group interaction results in more negotiation and therefore (if you accept Long's Interaction Hypothesis) more learning. However, a similar study by Pica and Doughty (1985),

discussed by Riki Birnbaum at the Haifa ETAI conference this year, was a lot more cautious in its conclusions; and Seedhouse (1999) found only very minimal and basic language use in task-based oral group work.

What's happening? There is, of course, some very effective group work going on in classrooms. But a lot of teachers are avoiding it. This is partly because of a (frequently quite justifiable!) fear of loss of control in the classroom. But it is also because of a feeling (again, often justified) that group work may result in a 'dilution' of learning (a lot of time spent off-task, or using L1, or with only one or two members of the group actually doing all the work).

A sensible conclusion: In my opinion there are three major justifications for doing group work. One is to provide opportunities for talking in English (there is no way all the students can participate in a full-class discussion; the only way they can all get to talk is if you put them in small groups or pairs to do so). The second is to give them opportunities to learn to work together, cooperate and negotiate and foster interactive and mutually respectful processes of negotiation: in other words, as part of our contribution to personal education for democracy. A third reason is to provide opportunities to work in groups for those students who do learn better this way.

But there is no a priori justification for doing group work as valuable in itself. It has to be justified, in each case, in terms of clear learning and educational benefits.

Myth # 7 Younger learners learn languages better than older ones

I'm ending with a myth that is really totally mythical! Its basis is the observed phenomenon that young children, when transplanted to a new country, learn the local language with apparent ease.

So far so good. But the reasoning that therefore young children learn languages better is simply not justified on this basis: the conclusion does not follow from the premise.

The research shows exactly the opposite: given the same number of hours of instruction, older learners, all things being equal, will learn faster (various studies are quoted in Marinova-Todd et. al. 2000). And any of us who have taught all the way up the school know that we can get much more learnt in a lesson in a seventh grade than we can in a second.

So why/how do immigrant children learn so well?

The key is in the 'immigrant' situation. Immigrant children have three important advantages that cannot be replicated in a school EFL situation:

1. They have hours and hours of exposure: at least half their waking time, assuming they are attending a school or kindergarten, and only coming back to their parents in the afternoon. And this time may be augmented if they are playing with local-language-speaking friends outside the home in the afternoons and at weekends. Say, altogether, something like 40-50 hours a week? Here, they have (maybe) four 45-minute periods.
2. They have optimal motivation: it's a matter of (social) survival. They have to learn the language if they are to manage at all. Here, the motivation is (I'm putting this cautiously!) less than optimal.
3. The ratio of teacher to student is normally one-to-one (they are usually talking to one other person who is a speaker of the local language). It may even be two or three teachers to one learner (if, for example, they are playing with a group of native-speaker kids). Here, the ratio is one teacher to 30 or 40 students.

There are various reasons why adults cannot take advantage of these three factors as effectively as children. One is the slow, intuitive language acquisition process of young learners – particularly suited to a long-term immersion situation – as contrasted with a more conscious, cognitively sophisticated learning process by older ones. Another is the more developed cultural and language identity of older learners which often inhibits adoption of the 'foreign' language (particularly accent) and leads adults to search out social contacts (thus increasing time spent speaking the mother tongue) with people from a similar background.

In any case, the conclusion for school-based learning is clear. If we could replicate the three conditions described above in our first grades, and maintain them all the way up the school there would be some justification for beginning English early. But we can't. Nor should we try: there are other important things that young children need to be learning in their early years in school. It just doesn't make sense to sacrifice progress in, for example, first-language literacy, or numeracy, or nature-study and literature, for the sake of English learning which they can do so much faster and more efficiently in later years.

What's happening. Unfortunately, English is being introduced earlier and earlier, because of the popular assumption that younger is better. This is happening all over the world. It's the 'laymen' who believe this, who have the votes; the people who make the decisions want to be elected; hence the decision to bring in English early is purely political. It has little to do with the good of the students themselves. The youngsters who begin English in first grade or kindergarten are learning a few words, of course, but the benefit (amount of learning) is not in reasonable proportion to the investment (time and money).

A sensible conclusion. I would say: start English in fourth grade, and then increase the number of hours of English in higher classes to five or six hours a week.

But then, I'm not a politician. I'm only a teacher.

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GRAMMARING

By Apolonija Klan_ar Kobal

Editor's Note: The following article is taken from the Slovenian journal (vol.7, no.25). We are grateful to the editor, Mojca Belak, whom we met at the Brighton IATEFL Conference, for granting us permission to reprint it.

I guess anyone who has taught English for a while will agree that language is more fluid and elusive than we would like it to be. If we become professionally involved in it and are not blind to many of its characteristics that are not described in grammar books, we have to realize that English – as any language – is much more than grammar, more often than not defying simple descriptions and all encompassing foolproof rules.

What can we – as language teachers – do if we repeatedly come across sentences such as "There's so many things..." or across what we have been taught is a "wrong use of the progressive" as in "The NHS Trust hospital is having to cut operations due to lack of cash."? Tell our pupils off and tell them that they should know better or ask them where they got such terrible English from? Don't we know the answer? Haven't we watched TV, listened to foreign radio programmes and heard such "mistakes" ourselves many times? Don't we realize that it is the spoken language of TV shows and soaps that many of our pupils get to hear most often?

Obviously, it is not a good idea simply to go on saying "this is wrong" or "you cannot say that". Because our pupils will think to themselves that we should know better and would in fact be perfectly right about that. Why don't we rather check if there are any reasonable guidelines about the use of such structures? But where to find them?

***Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (LGSWE) D. Biber et al., 1999**

LGSWE is the book to consult on matters of spoken language and "the grammar of conversation". It certainly does live up to its title (the "spoken" part of it as well). As David Crystal says: "For the foreseeable future, anyone with a serious interest in English grammar will have to take into account the information this book contains." The beauty of LGSWE is that it is a descriptive and not a prescriptive grammar. In other words, it tells us what the language is like and not what it should be like. It is entirely corpus-based and includes no made-up examples. As we can read in its preface, "some aspects of traditional grammar are challenged by this book, and some new findings, not even suspected before now, will surprise and interest the reader." Throughout LGSWE, different forms as used in fiction, newspapers, academic books and conversation are identified, the authors not only commenting on the statistical occurrence of respective forms, but also looking for the reasons why we choose a particular structure in a particular context. Let us have a look at some examples:

In paragraph "Concord with existential there" (p. 186), we find examples from conversation, such as:

There's so many police forces that don't even have computers...
Garry, there's apples, if you want one.

In the Findings section we find out that such examples are somewhat more common in conversation than the standard constructions with plural verb plus plural noun phrase. Preferences in conversation differ, depending on the tense of the form of the verb. In particular, singular past-tense verb forms are more rarely followed by plural noun phrases. There is a simple explanation for the special behaviour of 'there's: because of the contraction, 'there's tends to behave as a single invariable unit for the purposes of speech processing. The connection is far less close in 'there was', which is not reduced to a single syllable in speech and is not contracted in writing.

The special behaviour of 'there's is matched by a similar tendency for here's, where's, and how's, as in:

Here's your shoes.
Where's your tapes?
How's things?

Let's proceed to see what LGSWE has to say about the use of the progressive tenses.

It is good to remember that "the common progressive aspect verbs typically take a human subject as agent, actively controlling the action (or state) expressed by the verb. In contrast, some of the verbs that rarely occur in the progressive take a human subject as experiencer, undergoing but not controlling the action or state

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expressed by the verb. ... Similar factors are influential in distinguishing between progressive and non-progressive mental verbs. That is, verbs like think and wonder, which commonly occur with the progressive, can be interpreted as involving an active agent controlling the thought process. In contrast, verbs like appreciate, desire, know, like, and want are more typically interpreted as expressing a state experienced by someone." (p.473).

As the authors have put it (p. 475), "the particular frequency of the verbs of saying and thinking with the past progressive is puzzling. It seems the use of the past progressive with these verbs... conveys a more vivid imagery and a greater sense of involvement than the simple past tense."

The statistics LGSWE gives are often rather surprising, such as the following information regarding the use of two English aspects (p. 462):

- In AmE conversation, the progressive aspect is much more common than in BrE conversation. Conversely, in BrE news the perfect aspect is much more common than in AmE news.
- In AmE conversation, the progressive is about twice as common as the perfect. In marked contrast, in BrE news the perfect is about twice as common as the progressive.

The authors admit (p. 463) that "the interpretation of these findings can only be highly speculative. The progressive has been in use for 500 years. AmE conversation often appears the most 'advanced' variety in our Corpus, so it would not be surprising if it was setting the trend in the increasing use of the progressive aspect as well."

It is easy to see how such information can be useful first for our own understanding and then to our teaching. If pupils are presented the more recent state of affairs in spoken language as described in LGSWE and then explained that in most cases seeming "violations of grammar" follow their own logic in the sense of happening only in specific contexts, they will come to understand why they make such "mistakes". But they will also realise that because of similar constructions in specific environments of spoken language they cannot just "do away with grammar" whenever they feel like it, and especially not when writing essays.

Can you imagine what havoc the following table could wreak on our pupils (or on us, for that matter) if no discussion of findings followed?

Corpus findings:	**Percentage use of the non-standard forms in conversation**	
standard form	non-standard form	% use of non-standard form
you were	you was	c. 10%
I say	I says	c. 50%
he doesn't	he don't	c. 40%

Go and check p. 190 to see when and especially why such deviations occur. And do check Section E: "Grammar in a Wider perspective: The Grammar of Conversation."

Do you grammar?

For the reasons hinted at above, we should all be doing what the title of this article suggests, namely "grammaring". *Grammaring* (from the verb to *grammar*) seems to be catching on as a technical term in ELT (see "Uncovering Grammar" by Scott Thornbury, Macmillan, 2002) and basically stands for exploring grammar in context, devising and guessing rules and models of grammar on the basis of clever observation and awareness-raising that lead to noticing grammar.

This might be difficult for many of us who have mostly been exposed to a rule-feeding/reproducing routine at university with very little or none of the cognitive background that is essential in the process of grammaring. To get familiar with the idea of grammaring in a friendly way, try reading the above-mentioned "Uncovering Grammar", which has two parts, the first - Uncovering grammar, discussing the idea of grammaring, and the second - Classroom activities, offering many tasks that you can use in your classroom.

If you like the idea of grammaring and have always tried to do your grammar teaching in context but were short of suitable materials, then you are looking for a grammar book that will introduce you to exploring grammar in context. There is one superb book of the kind:

Exploring Grammar in Context: Grammar Reference and Practice, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced
R. Carter, R. Hughes and M. McCarthy
Cambridge University Press, 2000

This book is a real gem. It has a very nice "To the teacher" section which is useful to read even if we never read introductory notes, because it highlights the role of context in grammar (and language) learning.

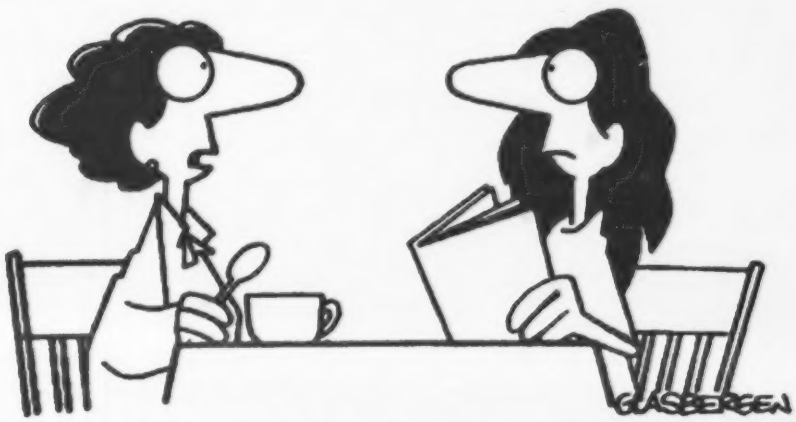
The book emphasizes the idea of grammar as choice, and gives us many opportunities to exercise grammatical choice in relation to particular contexts in which the language is used.

If you are looking for new ways of teaching if-clauses which would not cause so much misunderstanding as the three well known (and in many respects highly misleading) rules do, treat yourself to Section 11 – *If*-constructions.

Nobody wants to talk about the ways we teach articles in secondary school, often on the pretext that there is indeed not much to be said about them because "even native speakers always disagree on their use" (they do, but definitely not as often as we would like to believe...). Just have a look at section 16, which talks about the use of the articles and other determiners. It is bound to deepen our understanding of the topic and perhaps also our teaching it.

And there is the excellent Part E, called "Exploring Spoken Grammar in Context". Nobody is too old to read it. Like the rest of the book, it is written in a most comprehensible way, offering a lot of useful information and revealing comments. Apart from traditional gap filling, rewriting, cloze and multiple-choice exercises, Grammar in Context also provides a variety of other activities, such as problem solving, observation, awareness raising and more inductive and text-manipulating activities.

All the books mentioned above are excellent reference materials, but without us teachers reading them, they stay very lonely and silent teaching materials. Make them speak in your classroom! Aren't you tempted to explore what might be in the little black box called "mind" which we use in mysterious ways in our language communication?



"Friday night you stayed out until almost 9:00, yesterday you had cola instead of milk and this morning you forgot to floss. Your father and I are afraid you're getting too wild."

Everyday Reading Strategies

Prentice Hall Literature: Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes
Prentice Press

Reviewed by Margaret Porat

Although this booklet is relatively thin physically, it contains a wealth of information. The underlying assumption is that all students, even proficient ones, can improve their skills and enhance their understanding and enjoyment of literature by practicing effective reading strategies. In spite of the fact that this booklet correlates to different literature pieces in the two Prentice Hall Literature Series (grades 6-8 and grades 9-11), the booklet can in fact help any student who would like to improve his or her reading skills and strategies.

The booklet includes a collection of 21 graphic organizers and instructional notes that teach and enable the practice of strategic reading techniques. The graphic organizers are intended for before-, during- and after-reading activities. Towards the beginning of the booklet, there is a section called "reading strategies at a glance". The 21 reading strategies are listed under the general headings of Predictograms (using the title, pictures, words or phrases from selections to help students predict what the selections might be about) and Maps and Organizers (which provide opportunities to begin looking at how texts are organized and to examine relationships and ideas between and within selections). After this section, the 21 strategies are presented in the form of graphic organizers. Each graphic organizer is first described, then a sample organizer is provided using a specific example from the Prentice Literature Series. Finally, a blank graphic organizer for each strategy is provided. This can be photocopied and used with any selection of literature, and is suitable for any age and any level.

I was very impressed with this booklet. Although I have often tried to create my own templates and flow charts for understanding a particular aspect of a text (a very time-consuming task), I found it very useful to have the 21 graphic organizers all included in one booklet together with instructional notes and sample charts. I highly recommend this as an extremely helpful and effective reference book for teachers dealing with reading at any level and in any framework. It is very user-friendly and to the point. The templates are simple and clear, but get to the crux of the issue and can, I believe, enhance the students' enjoyment and understanding of any piece of literature.

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Write your research report: A real-time guide.
Globe Fearon. NJ: Pearson Learning, 2003.

Reviewed by Batya Lederfein.

Projects are becoming integrally incorporated into our Curriculum. As has been argued by two of the contributors to this edition of the Forum – Amos and Rachel – we have become more aware of the necessity to promote higher-order thinking skills into the teaching of English as a foreign language, and conducting research projects is one way in which this can be done.

I believe that the booklet Write Your Research Report is an indispensable tool for both teachers and students. It is written for native-speaker students. Although the age-level isn't specified, I guess from the language of the booklet that the audience in mind is junior-high students, but native-speaker students at any level could benefit. In our context, I think that some "proficiency"-level students might be able to read it independently, but that with appropriate guidance, the booklet could be used by a very much wider population.

Students are guided carefully through ten steps: choosing a topic, narrowing it down, conducting research, gathering information, organizing the information, outlining the report, writing the first draft, writing the introduction and conclusion, documenting sources, and going through the process of revision. These steps are presented in sufficient detail to be useful but in language that is coherent and uncluttered. Tips, in the form of "Expert Advice" and "Computer Sense", present the content briefly in the margins. Another valuable tool is modeling the way an imaginary student goes through each of the steps to write up a research report on the way advertisers mislead young consumers.

It's amazing how much useful information is contained in such a slim volume: use of primary and secondary sources, critical evaluation of websites, prewriting techniques, organizational grids, guidance regarding paragraph construction, rules of documentation, and a final chapter on dealing with persistent language problems.

As I have said above, teachers should definitely consider using this booklet for help with conducting Bagrut-level research projects. I also heartily recommend the book for college students of academic writing.

Make a note / Mark in your diary

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TEACHER'S TEARS

By Elana Cheshin

This poem was written in 1985 and published in the ETJ in 1986. It was written as the result of a very hurtful incident. As a young and not-so-experienced classroom teacher, I had been wrongfully accused by someone high up in administration of missing a parent-teacher meeting. The fact is that I had not missed the meeting, but had left early in order to attend to my infant daughter who had been hospitalized with an illness. Seventeen years later, I can still remember the pain I felt when, instead of appreciating the extent of my dedication to work, despite the personal difficulties I was coping with, the vice-principal had reprimanded me for not following through with responsibilities.

TEACHER'S TEARS

In the hall
In view of pupils
Unpredicted flow the tears,
"Why am I so "unrespected"?"
Words that fall on startled ears.

Present perfect, simple tenses;
Do without naive pretenses.
It's not English that I teach.
I teach CHILDREN – strive to reach
Their minds, their hearts, their very souls,
Help each one achieve great goals!

Meetings and evaluations,
Talks with parents and advisors,
Never lose respect or patience,
Always be a sympathizer.
Never hurt their fragile egos,
Be polite, show pride, respect.
Honor them, be true, sincere –
Oh, this from teachers we expect.

Educate them, teach and learn,
But when does *teacher* get a turn?
I too need food for energy
To face tomorrow and to be
All that you expect to find
So try to be a bit more kind.

I am hungry and I yearn
To hear your praise
To have my turn
So I can then go on and do
My teaching work as I'm meant to.

Dr. Elana Cheshin – cheshin@netvision.net.il – teaches at Beit Berl College. She works as Academic Advisor of English at PISGA, Petach Tikva, and as a teacher trainer (inservice coordinator) at Pisga Ramat Gan. She also works as a national counselor in the MIFTAN schools for Agaf Shachar. Elana is the pedagogical advisor for "Language Connections", a non-profit organization made up of English teachers from throughout the region, both Arab and Jewish. She has worked independently and on teams to design instructional materials (text books, workbooks, classroom management guidelines, software) which cater to heterogeneous classrooms and children with special needs.

Please submit all contributions either as an email Word attachment or on a diskette in Word (plus a printout). Note the document name and program type clearly on the diskette.

Please try to keep the language non-sexist, e.g., by using **they** instead of **he/she**.

References should be written out in APA style. You can find this in the "OWL Handouts" put out by Purdue University – **http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/**

If you have a photo of yourself, or any other attractive visual material, e.g., cartoons, we would be interested in receiving this.

At the end of the text, please include brief biodata about your professional life, including where you teach and any other significant information. Please include your email address.

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